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**LEGENDS & HISTORY
OF
SARAWAK**

**BY
CHANG PAT FOH**



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K.O.U. (KOREA)
KETUA MENTERI SARAWAK

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated

to

*my wife, Mui Lan and my children,
Pheh Sze, Pheh Ping, Wei Chung and Wei Tze*

and

the people of Sarawak.

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Foreword

By

**Yang Berhormat Datuk Amar Dr. George Chan Hong Nam,
DA , PNBS, KMN, PBS, ABS
Deputy Chief Minister, Minister for Finance and Public Utilities and
Minister for Social Development Sarawak**

HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS to Saudara Chang Pat Foh for his great effort to produce this rare local historical book known as **"LEGENDS AND HISTORY OF SARAWAK"**. The book highlights

Sarawak legends in general, its geography and its people, the history and developments of all the nine divisions as well as the twenty-eight districts in Sarawak from the early years until today.

Sarawak legends and oral traditions must be recorded so that scholars, general public, our children and our future generations will know our historical past lest they be forgotten with the passing of time. In order to know who we are, the past events are important. If there is no past, there is no present and, therefore, there will be no future. In this particular case, Saudara Chang has sacrificed his leisure time and energy to record down the local legends and oral traditions throughout the length and the breadth of Sarawak during the course of his official duties.

I wish to call upon the general public especially the government officers to emulate the good example shown by Saudara Chang Pat Foh to record down various events and interests occurred in the areas they are serving so that this knowledge can become a vast reservoir of knowledge for writing. I am particularly proud and happy that Saudara Chang who really takes the trouble and initiative to record down our colourful legends and eventful history of Sarawak. In actual fact, this excellent book, which is the first of its kind published in Sarawak, is a dictionary on the legends, history and developments of the State. I expect and encourage Sarawakians especially the students to read the book for the sake of knowing more about this beautiful Land of Hornbill.

**Y.B. Datuk Amar Dr. George Chan Hong Nam
Deputy Chief Minister, Minister for Finance and
Public Utilities and Minister for Social Development Sarawak**

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I wish to express my heart-felt thanks to those who have encouraged me to write this book **"LEGENDS AND HISTORY OF SARAWAK"**.

I would like to convey my gratitude to Mr. Tan Hock Hee, Mr. Sanib Said, Mr. Peter Minos, Mr. Lim Chwee Cheng, Mr. Joseph Wee, Mr. Fong Hon Kah, Mr. Edward Sadai, Encik Tuah bin Abdullah, Mr. David Panggau Sandin, Agriculture Staff in Sarawak and many others who have supplied me with useful information and advice so that I am able to complete this book. I am indebted to Mr. Tan Hock Hee for his financial support for the printing of the book and to the Sarawak Museum especially Mr. Lim Yu Seng for the supply of some valuable photos to be included in this book. I am most grateful to my wife, Yun Mui Lan, who helps me in the proof reading and Puan Teresa Wong who kindly assists me to type out original manuscript.

Finally, I wish to express my grateful thanks to Yang Berhormat Datuk Amar Dr. George Chan Hong Nam, Deputy Chief Minister, Minister for Finance and Public Utilities and Minister for Social Development Sarawak for his financial support and his message in the Foreword.

CHANG PAT FOH

Author

1999

LEGENDS AND HISTORY OF SARAWAK

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

"LEGENDS AND HISTORY OF SARAWAK" is a local book which is actually describing the history of Sarawak. The book which consists of 13 chapters concentrates on Sarawak in general, Geography and its People, Ancient and Modern History of Sarawak. It also describes in detail the nine divisional headquarters and in brief all the twenty-eight districts in Sarawak.

Sarawak has a colourful and interesting history dated way back to the 8th century when both Buddhism and Hinduism first extended their influence on Sarawak especially in the Sarawak River Delta until the early 15th century when Islam had advanced to South East Asia region. Sarawak then became the southern part of Brunei Territory. Brooke Regime then seized over the control of Sarawak from the weak Brunei authority from 1841-1941. Then the Japanese invaders came and conquered the State from 1941-1945. With effect from 1946-1963 Sarawak became a British colony. On 16.9.1963, Sarawak achieved her independence within Malaysia. For the past 36 years, Sarawak has transformed itself from an unknown, less developed area into a well-known and fast developing state in Malaysia towards the next millennium.

Every historical event is a legend by itself and, therefore, both legends and history

are equally important to a country and its people. History always alters our future. That is why we frequently recall the past in order to think ahead. Hence, if there is no past, there is no present and, therefore, there will be no future. The past is a repository of precedents, the present and the future grown out of the past. This is history.

However, legend is distinct from history. All societies no matter how advance and modern trace their origins in legends. A legend is in fact an unauthenticated story from early times, preserved by tradition and popularly thought to be historical. From that perspective, legend is an account of historical origins of a particular group. It is an account of early life that provides that particular group some sense of spiritual and cultural attachment not only to the natural environment but also the group, known as society. This is legend.

This book is therefore a combination of both legends and history. While writing down the factual history of Sarawak, a collection of a series of legends on Sarawak is being highlighted below:-

- 1) Was "Sarawak" meant "Antimony" or "Serah ke awak" (in Malay language it means give to you)?

- 2) Does "Kuching" really mean "Cat" or something else?
- 3) Was "Muara Tuang" the former name of Kota Samarahan a place for pouring water?
- 4) Was "Simanggang" the former name of Sri Aman a place where "all of them die" ("Si" in Chinese Teochew means die and "Magang" in Iban dialect means all of them)?
- 5) Was "Sarikei" a place where they were really a lot of "Silly Guides"?
- 6) Was "Sibu" really a place where there were plenty of Sibau (wild rambutan)?
- 7) Was "Kapit" a place where longhouses made of split bamboo-sheets were situated in the olden days. (In Iban language split bamboo-sheet means Kepit)?
- 8) Was "Bintulu" where the natives picked up human heads in the olden days (Mentu Ulau in Bintulu

Melanau meant "Pick up heads")?

- 9) Was "Miri" derived from the name of a community called "Mirek" who stayed at the mouth of Miri River?
- 10) Was "Limbang" really a place where people went to pan gold at Bukit Mas ("Limbang" in local Malay means panning gold)?

There are many other legends, stories and oral traditions as to how the names of other places in Sarawak were derived from. Please read the book and find out the details for yourself.

Knowing the legends and history of a state as well as its people provide a better insight into the reasons behind the way a state is organised, its beliefs and its past historical activities. Both legends and history contain much information about the culture, the way of life and social activities of a state and its people. So being Sarawakians, we must therefore know our legends and history of our beloved state in order that we know who we are.

CHAPTER 1

SARAWAK IN GENERAL

Map of Borneo showing the location of Sarawak



I. INTRODUCTION

Sarawak is a land of many rivers, rolling terrains and majestic mountains. It has been described as the "Land of Supernatives and Superwonders". Sarawak is also best known as the land of vastness - vast mass of land, vast ethnic diversity and vast natural wonders. The name "Sarawak" was taken from the Sarawak River which flows through Kuching Division.

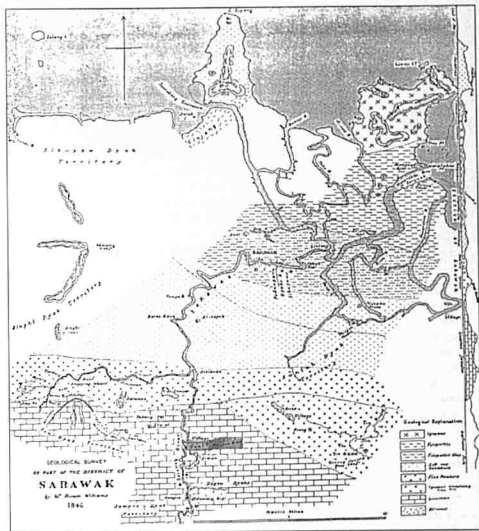
Sarawak is the biggest state in Malaysia. The State has the longest river (Batang Rajang), the state with the most districts (28 districts) in Malaysia, the world's largest flower (Rafflesia), the world's biggest butterfly (Raja Brooke's Birdwing) the world's largest passage and natural chamber in Gunung Mulu National Park. Even a variety of carnivorous pitcher plants can be found in the state of Sarawak. It has also evidence of the earliest known existence of man in Southeast Asia (Niah Cave). Besides, it has the rich cultural heritage of the diverse ethnic communities of Sarawak. For record purpose, Sarawak has 27 ethnic communities and it is the only state in Malaysia having the most ethnic groups living together in harmony. Moreover, Sarawak has an enchanting history which is one of the heroic adventures and romance. It has a patriotic story of brave tribal warriors intensely protective of their respective territories, engaging in fierce battles to protect their domains against foreign intruders.

Sarawak saw itself making a sudden leap from being a province under the Brunei Sultanate, a country under the Brooke Regime and, later, a colony under the British Rule to being one of the major dynamic, progressive and bustling business centres and hopefully a developed state in Malaysia by the Year 2020.

The multiracial state is very proud of her outstanding image in the country. Sarawak has her own state flag, state crest, state bird, state fish, state tree and state flower to project herself not only in the country but also to the world at large. Besides, Sarawak has some of the world's richest forests and most spectacular scenery. Indeed, it is difficult to find another place in the world that has so much diversity in nature, people and culture in one package.

Sarawak was not only well-known for the production of large quantity of gold from Upper Sarawak since 1760, the discovery of diamond at Landeh in 1876 had also made Sarawak famous in the country. A piece of diamond weighing 72 carat was discovered at a small river along Sungai Sarawak Kanan at Landeh. Lau Kian Huat Company bought the diamond for \$20,000.00 from the miner and presented it to the wife of second White Rajah and at that time, the diamond was known as "the Star of Sarawak". The river where the diamond was found was called Diamond River until today.

Geological Survey Map of Part of the District of Sarawak (1846)



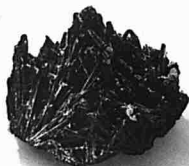
The original Sarawak was a small place when Pengiran Muda Hashim, the representative of Sultan of Brunei gave it to Sir James Brooke as a reward of his service to pacify the Anti-Brunei Movement headed by Datu Patinggi Ali on 24.9.1841. It was only 18,000 square kilometres stretching from Tanjung Datu to Samarahan River.

II. ORIGIN OF THE NAME OF SARAWAK

There are three versions:

1) "Serawak" - the name of a mineral

In old Bahasa Melayu, "Serawak" means "antimony". In 1823, there was a discovery of antimony in Upper Sarawak, especially in Siniawan area, Bau. Until the closure of the Paku Kong Mine in 1985, more than 90,000 tonnes of antimony had been produced and exported from Upper Sarawak. Since Sarawak River flows through Siniawan, it is likely that people in the olden days referred the river which flows through antimony areas as "Serawak" river. Even when Sir



Sarawak Antimony.



Sungai Sarawak at the side of Kampung Bombok, Kuching/Batu Kitang Road.

James Brooke wrote home while contemplating his navigational plans in 1839, he was aware of the antimony ore in Sarawak. He wrote, "My intention is first to visit Sarawak - a river whence they get antimony ore....".

There are three tributaries which form Sarawak River Proper i.e. Sungai Sarawak Kanan, Sungai Sarawak Kiri and Sungai Sarawak. Sungai Sarawak is found running at the side of Kampung Bombok at Kuching/Batu Kitang Road. The people of Kampung Bombok claim that the name Sarawak River Proper derives from Sungai Sarawak at their Kampung area. However, upon checking the historical data, it was discovered that the people of Kampung Bombok migrated from Gunung Serembu, Siniawan where the original Kampung Bombok was situated sometime after 1842. By then, the name of Sarawak River Proper was already in existence even before Sir James Brooke became the first White Rajah of Sarawak in 1841. Hence, the claim by the people of Kampung Bombok that the name Sarawak River Proper derives from Sungai Sarawak at Kampung Bombok is difficult to be accepted.

2) *"Serawak" - the name of pineapple*

Another version related to the production of pineapple along Sungai Sarawak especially around Batu Kawa area. In the olden days, the pineapple from the area was extraordinary sweet and, hence, it was called "Nanas Serawak".

3) *"Serawak" - "Give it to You"*

There was a legend being related by the old people in the olden days that when Brunei authority took over Sarawak River area in the 15th century, the local people at that time welcomed the move. Hence, they agreed and said, "Serah ke Awak" which means "Give it to you". Eventually, "Serah ke Awak" became "Serawak" (Sarawak) until today.

A check on the meaning of Serawak (Sarawak) from Kamus Dewan (Dictionary published by Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia 1997 Third Edition) reveals that there are two meanings to the word "Serawak" i.e. "Antimony" or "Sweet Pineapple" (Nanas). Version 1 of the origin of Sarawak is therefore more reliable because antimony was discovered in Upper Sarawak in the early 19th century and Sarawak River flows through Upper Sarawak (Siniawan) and Kuching District before reaching the South China Sea.

III. STATE FLAG

Red Colour: symbolises courage, determination and sacrifices of the Rakyat in their tireless pursuit to attain and maintain progress and esteem in the course of creating a model State;

*Sarawak
State Flag.*



Yellow Colour: denotes the supremacy of Law and Order, unity and stability in diversity;

Black Colour: symbolises the rich natural resources and wealth of Sarawak such as petroleum, timber, etc which provide the foundation for the advancement of her people;

The yellow nine pointed Star denotes the nine divisions where the Rakyat lives in harmony.

The Star symbol also embodies the aspiration of the people of Sarawak in their quest to improve their quality of life.

The present Sarawak Flag was hoisted at Kuching State Stadium on 31.8.1988 by Ketua Menteri Sarawak, YAB Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr.) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud on the occasion of the State 25th Anniversary of Independence within Malaysia.



*Sarawak
State
Crest.*

IV. STATE CREST

The State Crest consists of the symbol of a ceremonial Kenyalang with its wings and tails each comprising 13 strips to represent 13 states in Malaysia and Bunga Raya appearing on each of the outer sides of the legs. The bird stands on a ribbon with the motto "Hidup Selalu Berkhidmat" and State flag on the chest. However, the motto has been replaced by the new State Motto "Bersatu, Berusaha, Berbakti" which means "United, Industrious, Dedicated".

The Crest signifies the proud "Land of the Hornbills" flying high in aspirations and achievement in all fields of endeavour, guided by the

ideology of the "Politics of Development". The State Crest also serves to distinguish Sarawak from the rest of the world.

The present State Crest was adopted and used in Sarawak with effect from 31.8.1988 on the occasion of the State 25th Anniversary of Independence within Malaysia.

V. STATE BIRD OF SARAWAK



Name: Rhinoceros Hornbill
Local Name: Burung Kenyalang
(Enggang Badak)

The state bird of Sarawak is Burung Kenyalang. The bird is not only found in Borneo but also Peninsular Malaysia, Sumatra of Indonesia and Thailand. In Sarawak, there are eight species of Hornbill

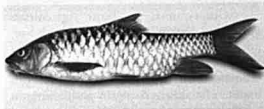
and, hence, it is called the "Land of the Hornbills". The types of Hornbill are as follows:-

- 1) Enggang Badak (Rhinoceros Hornbill)
- 2) Enggang Berkedut
- 3) Kekalau
- 4) Enggang Terbang Mertua
- 5) Enggang Gatal Birah
- 6) Enggang Jambul Putih
- 7) Enggang Guning; and
- 8) Alau Pedada

Among all the hornbills, the magnificent Rhinoceros Hornbill is the most revered of all by the natives of Sarawak. Its beauty is best seen in flight when its black wings form a stark contrast to its white tail and head.

All types of Burung Kenyalang are protected birds, anyone who catches and kills the birds will be fined for RM25,000.00 and 2 years imprisonment.

VI. STATE FISH OF SARAWAK



Local Name: Ikan Semah
Scientific Name: *Tor douronensis*
(Valenciennes)

This freshwater fish can be found in upper reaches of the rivers in Borneo, Peninsular Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand. In Sarawak the fish can be found in most of its major river systems e.g. Rajang, Baram, Limbang, Batang Ai and Layar rivers. At one time it was in abundance. However, presently the natural stocks in the rivers have decreased tremendously due to over exploitation and pollution of the natural habitats, both directly and indirectly.

Depending on locality, the fry/fingerlings may be called by different names. In Lubok Antu/Batang Ai area, the locals call them "Tengih," while in Layar/Spak area, it is called "Tengas". Others may simply call them "Semah".

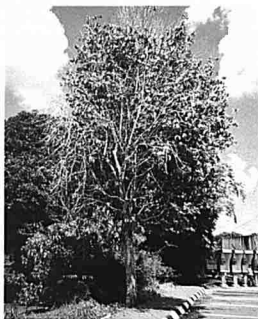
Semah has been named as the State Fish. The fish, which often reaches 40 centimetres in length, is highly esteemed for food and, hence, it is one of the most popular freshwater fish in Sarawak. It fetches high price in the market; as much as RM40.00 or more per kilogramme weight, depending on locality.

Observations in Tarat Agriculture Station in Serian show that this fish can adapt to pond conditions and accept artificial feeds readily. Preliminary observations have indicated that the fish tends to be slow growing in ponds without adequate aeration and water exchange.

Observations from on-farm trials has shown that with adequate aeration, water exchange and good quality pellet feeds of at

least 30% crude protein the fish can attain the body weight of 800 grammes in about one year. Observational trials are now being carried out to determine its performance under cage culture system.

VII. STATE TREE OF SARAWAK



Name: Belian Tree
Scientific Name: *Eusideroxylon Zwageri*

The nick name of Belian tree is Iron tree. It can be found in Borneo and Sumatra. In Sarawak, Belian Trees can be found in the forest of about 500 metres above the sea level in Kuching/Samarahan, Sri Aman, Miri and Kapit Divisions.

Belian posts or planks can really last for ages without rotting. Hence, it is commonly used in house construction, telephone and electricity posts and survey pegs.

During the celebration of World Forestry Day a few years ago, Belian tree was declared as the State Tree of Sarawak by the State Government.

VIII. STATE FLOWER OF SARAWAK



Name: Orchid Normah
Scientific Name: *Phalaenopsis Violacea* Witte

This lowland epiphytic orchid inhabits shady places by the rivers. It is found in Peninsular Malaysia, Sumatra and Borneo. It is a very attractive species. Flowers about 4-5 centimetres across, alternate, 2-ranked, 1 or 2 opening at a time. Sepals and petals are very pale greenish, flushed with mauve towards the base. Lateral sepals with inner halves at the base dark mauve. The flowers are very variable in colouring. There is also an alba

(white) form which is extremely rare. This species has been used to produce many colourful star-shaped 'novelty' hybrids.

This Orchid flower can be found in the forests of Sarawak especially in Lundu District of Kuching Division. In 1983, it was declared by the State Government of Sarawak as the State Flower in honour of the late wife of TYT Tun Abdul Rahman Ya'kub, the 4th Yang Dipertua Negeri Sarawak, Toh Puan Datuk Patinggi Hajjah Normah Abdullah.

IX. BIGGEST FLOWER IN THE WORLD



Name: Bunga Pakma
Scientific Name: *Rafflesia Tuanmudae*

Gunung Gading is the home of numerous rare plants including the world's largest flower, the spectacular *Rafflesia Tuanmudae*. When it is fully bloom, it stretches nearly one metre in width. Although the flower generally blooms throughout the year, November, December

and January can be regarded as the peak flowering season as the frequency of the blooms is high. Hence, *Rafflesia* has no specific flowering season, taking nine months to mature and each flower's bloom lasts only 4 or 5 days before withering. This flower smells faintly rotten, attracting carrion flies for pollination.

Gunung Gading National Park which is situated in Lundu District has an area of 4,106 hectares. It was gazetted as the National Park in 1983 and opened to the public in 1994.

X. BIGGEST BUTTERFLY IN THE WORLD



Name: Raja Brooke's
Birdwing
Scientific Name: *Trogonoptera*
brookiana

It is the biggest type of butterfly in the world. It can be found flitting around the

plants and flowers in the forest of Sarawak especially in areas between Gunung Mulu and Gunung Murud in Miri Division.

This beautiful famed butterfly has a pair of very long and pointed wings and with a wing expanse of from 6 to 6 1/4 inches. The wing is deep velvety black, with a curved band of spots of a brilliant metallic-green colour.

Raja Brooke's Birdwing, one of the most striking butterflies of Borneo was first discovered by a naturalist, Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace in 1855 and named after the first White Rajah of Sarawak, Sir James Brooke.

XI. WORLD FAMOUS CAVE SYSTEM - GUNUNG MULU



Gunung Mulu National Park is being considered as the 9th Wonder in the World. It was gazetted as a National Park in 1974 and it is situated within Miri and Limbang Divisions. It has an area of 52,866 hectares.

It includes:-

- 1) The world's largest cave passage (Deer Cave), it can hold England's St. Paul's Cathedral five times over.
- 2) The world's largest chamber (Sarawak Chamber) is 600 metres long, 450 metres wide and 100 metres high. It can accommodate 40 Boeing 747 aircrafts with room to spare.
- 3) The longest cave in South East Asia (Clearwater Cave) - 107 kilometres long.
- 4) The world famous pinnacles rise over 50 metres high with razor-sharp tips at Gunung Api and Benarat.

XII. CARNIVOROUS PITCHER PLANT

Sarawak is one of the world's centres of diversity for tropical pitcher plants of the Genus *Nepenthes*. This fascinating plants have more than 30 species in Borneo. Some pitcher plants can trap flies in their saxophone shaped leaves and then digest them in a reservoir of corrosive



fluid. Some varieties in Sarawak grow so big that they even drown rats in the enzyme soup.

The most famous pitcher plant is *Nepenthes Rajah*. It is the largest of all carnivorous plants producing pitches capable of holding two litres of fluid and can trap frogs, lizards and even rats. *Nepenthes* is the most complex and diverse array of animal-plant associations. A glimpse into any pitcher will provide the observer with a delightful, if not smelly, insight into these unique micro-habitats of a hidden world of tiny animals. They choose to live within the pitchers rather than being captured. More than 70 species of animals including the larvae of flies, mosquitoes, butterflies, moths, spiders and ants have been recorded living in *Nepenthes* plants.

I. INTRODUCTION

Sarawak, the Land of Hornbills, is one of the thirteen states and the largest state in the Federation of Malaysia. Covering an area of 124,450 square kilometres in north west of Borneo, its area is about 37% of Malaysia total land area which is almost the size of the whole of Peninsular Malaysia. It enjoys an extensive coastline of 720 kilometres along the South China Sea. It is bounded by Brunei on the north, Sabah on the northeast and Kalimantan Indonesia on the south, all in Borneo, the third largest island in the world.

The State of Sarawak is generally rugged and topographically complex. Swampy plains extend along most of the coastal areas, backed by a broad belt of undulating lowland intersected by many rivers which merge out from the mountainous interior. Situated in the tropical region, the greater part of Sarawak is still covered by primary forests and large portions of the area are practically uninhabited. The remaining land is mainly used for agricultural purposes. The highest mountain in the State is Gunung Murud which is 2,424 metres high and the longest river is none other than Batang Rajang which runs 564 kilometres through Kapit,

Sibu and Sarikei Divisions in the central region of Sarawak. Batang Rajang has been referred to as "The Pulse of Borneo" because its tentacles spread across the central region of Sarawak reaching into Kalimantan Borneo.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS

At present, Sarawak is administratively divided into nine divisions. Under the Administrative Areas Order 1987, all the divisions were renamed after the divisional headquarters, namely:-

Kuching Division
Samarahan Division
Sri Aman Division
Sarikei Division
Sibu Division
Kapit Division
Bintulu Division
Miri Division and
Limbang Division

Each Division is headed by a Resident who is assisted by District Officers each taking charge of a district. There are altogether twenty-eight districts and thirty-one sub-districts in Sarawak.

The area and percentage distribution by Divisions and Districts in Sarawak are as follows:-

District/Division	Area (sq. km)	Percentage Distribution
Kuching	1,869	1.5
Bau	884	0.7
Lundu	1,812	1.5
KUCHING DIVISION	4,565	3.7
Samarahan	594	0.5
Serian	2,040	1.6
Simunjan	2,328	1.9
SAMARAHAN DIVISION	4,962	4.0
Sri Aman	3,846	3.1
Lubok Antu	2,338	1.9
Betong (Saribas)	1,776	1.4
Saratok (Kalaka)	1,687	1.4
SRI AMAN DIVISION	9,647	7.8
Sibu	3,150	2.5
Mukah	5,019	4.0
Dalat	2,217	1.8
Kanowit	2,254	1.8
SIBU DIVISION	12,640	10.2
Sarikei	1,716	1.4
Meradong (Bintangor)	1,084	0.9
Daro	861	0.7
Matu	680	0.5
Julau	2,628	2.1
SARIKEI DIVISION	6,969	5.6
Kapit	15,596	12.5
Song	3,935	3.2
Belaga	19,403	15.6
KAPIT DIVISION	38,934	31.3

Bintulu	7,220	5.8
Tatau	4,946	4.0
BINTULU DIVISION	12,166	9.8
Miri	4,707	3.8
Baram (Marudi)	22,070	17.7
MIRI DIVISION	26,777	21.5
Limbang	3,978	3.2
Lawas	3,812	3.1
LIMBANG DIVISION	7,790	6.3
SARAWAK	124,450	100.0

Source: Land & Surveys Department, Sarawak

III. CLIMATE

Sarawak lies just above the Equator from latitude 0° 51' N to 5° N and extends from 109° 36' to 115° 40' E Meridians of longitude. It has a hot-wet equatorial climate.

Sarawak enjoys a tropical climate with coverage daytime temperature hovering between 24 degrees to 32 degrees Celsius. At night, on rainy days, the mercury might dip to a minimum of 22 degrees Celsius. Sarawak can be visited at any time throughout the year. The monsoon season or Landas is between November and February. While there are occasionally days when it rains continuously during the Landas, more likely than not the showers fall abruptly and are over just as quickly as it comes. The average annual rainfall

is between 330 centimetres and 460 centimetres.

IV. POPULATION

Sarawak is the most multiracial state in Malaysia with 27 ethnic groups living together. The theme of Sarawak is harmony and, hence, living in harmony is a way of life among the people in the State.

The population of Sarawak based on the 1990 figures provided by the Statistics Department was 1,670,000. However, according to the Mid-Year Population Estimates 1999, Sarawak had a population of 2,027,100. It is made up of the following ethnic groups:-

Ethnic Group	Population	Percentage
i) Malay	348,000	20.84%
ii) Melanau	96,000	5.75%
iii) Iban	493,000	29.52%
iv) Bidayuh	140,000	8.38%
v) Other indigenous (Kenyah, Kayan, Lun Bawang, Kelabit, Kedayan, Bisaya, Kajang, etc)	91,000	5.45%
vi) Chinese	493,000	28.92%
vii) Others (Indians, Eurasian, Javanese, etc)	19,000	1.14%
	-----	-----
	Total: 1,670,000	100%

According to the Mid-Year Population Estimates by Ethnic Groups provided by Statistics Department, Sarawak, the breakdown figures from 1994 to 1999 are as follows:-

Ethnic Group	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
i) Malay	388,700	398,700	407,600	416,600	425,800	435,000
ii) Melanau	103,400	105,500	107,200	109,000	110,900	112,800
iii) Iban	534,800	544,200	552,100	559,800	567,800	576,000
iv) Bidayuh	150,100	153,400	156,100	158,900	161,700	164,500
v) Other Indigenous Groups (Kenyah, Kayan, Lun Bawang, Kelabit, Kedayan, Bisaya, Kajang, etc)	109,900	111,500	112,900	114,200	115,700	117,400
vi) Chinese	505,400	514,200	521,600	529,300	536,900	544,400
vii) Others (Indians, Eurasian, Javanese, etc)	16,600	17,000	17,500	17,800	18,300	18,700
viii) Non-Malaysian Citizens	33,200	40,500	44,400	48,600	53,200	58,300
Total:	1,842,100	1,885,200	1,919,300	1,954,300	1,990,200	2,027,100

Below is the Mid-Year Population Estimates by Districts in Sarawak in 1999.

No.	Division	District	Total
1.	Kuching	1) Kuching	460,200
		2) Bau	42,800
		3) Lundu	29,100
2.	Samarahan	4) Samarahan	56,600
		5) Serian	84,800
		6) Simunjan	56,500
3.	Sri Aman	7) Sri Aman	66,200
		8) Lubok Antu	26,400
		9) Betong	52,200
4.	Sarikei	10) Saratok	44,800
		11) Sarikei	59,700
		12) Meradong	31,100
		13) Daro	16,100
		14) Julau	33,000
5.	Sibu	15) Matu	11,400
		16) Sibu	208,200
		17) Dalat	25,900
		18) Mukah	51,100
		19) Kanowit	29,000
6.	Bintulu	20) Bintulu	114,900
		21) Tatau	27,500
7.	Kapit	22) Kapit	70,800
		23) Song	20,800
		24) Belaga	30,700
8.	Miri	25) Miri	208,700
		26) Marudi	90,400
9.	Limbang	27) Limbang	41,800
		28) Lawas	36,600
Total			2,027,100

However, based on the projected population in the year 2000, there will be 2,149,000 people in Sarawak.

V. MAIN ETHNIC GROUPS IN SARAWAK

1) *The Malay*

At present, more than half of the Malay population live in both Kuching Division and Samarahan Division at the south-western end of the State. However, this community can be found throughout the length and breadth of Sarawak. It was believed that the origin of the Malay community came from Minangkabau in Sumatra via Datu Merpati and his followers. Some said their ancestors migrated from Java and others believed they came from Johore, Brunei or Kalimantan Indonesia. Although they are coastal people, they can be found in all the principle inland towns, living mostly in villages along river banks. A major portion is employed in the civil service, private sectors or involving themselves in various business. Many of them are fishermen and farmers. Ethnically they are a mixture of races. This is a result of their varied history and physical as well as cultural assimilation of different people who have settled along the coast of Sarawak. Islam is the cultural force that unites them.

2) *The Iban*

The Iban, Kayan dialect "Ivan" means "wanderer" or Iban's own

version means "person" are formerly known as Sea Dayak. They originated from Kapuas and Ketungau, Kalimantan Indonesia as early as 1540 are by far the largest indigenous group in Sarawak as it forms nearly a third of the total population. They comprise half the total number of people engaged in agriculture, the main part of which is hill padi cultivation and small-holdings of cocoa, rubber, oil palm and pepper. However, many of them have been engaged in public services, private sectors and commercial activities. The Iban are found throughout the lowlands of Sarawak, living mostly in longhouses along the streams and river banks. A relatively large number of Iban are now Christians, although they have a strong cultural identity of their own. The Ibans are exclusively renowned for the weaving of Pua Kumbu and making wooden carvings.

3) *The Bidayuh*

The Bidayuh formerly known as Land Dayak are the third largest ethnic group in Sarawak. In Bidayuh language, "Bi" means "people" and "Dayuh" means "Land". Hence, "Bidayuh" means "people of the land". They came from Sungkong in Kalimantan about twenty generations before

Krakatau eruption on 27.8.1883. This indicated that the Bidayuh community had settled down in Sarawak sometime in 1380s already. Initially, they settled around Kuching area. However, in later years, when they were being attacked by other stronger groups, they moved to the hilly areas in Kuching and Samarahan Divisions till today. Their population distribution was limited to the Kuching and Samarahan Divisions, but today Bidayuhs can be found throughout the length and breadth of Sarawak. Some Bidayuhs still live in longhouses but most of them stay in individual houses in the kampungs. Most of them are still padi farmers, planting cocoa and other cash crops. Many of them involve themselves in oil palm plantations. Majority of the Bidayuh population are Christians while there are still some small groups prefer to remain as pagans and a few prefer to be converted into Islam.

The Bidayuhs are divided into four different ethnic dialect groups as follows:-

- i) Bukar/Sadong dialect (Serian District)
- ii) Biatak dialect (Kuching district)
- iii) Singai/Jagoi dialect (Bau District)
- iv) Selakau and Lara dialects (Lundu District).

4) *The Orang Ulu*

These groups are known as "upriver people" or "people of the interior" are found in the interior highlands of the Miri, Limbang and Kapit Divisions. Orang Ulu refers to the 21 minority indigenous groups in Sarawak. Their origin came from Apau Kayan River in Kalimantan, Indonesia in the 1800s. Of these, the Penan are semi-nomadic and live in the remote upper reaches of the Rajang and Baram Rivers. The Kayan and Kenyah people, though quite distinct, are often found in association and live in the regions of the middle and upper reaches of the main rivers in Sarawak and Kalimantan, Indonesia. They are primarily farmers, planting hill padi and rubber as well as rearing pigs and poultry. They are also outstanding craftsmen who are skilled at wood carving, making good knives and spears as well as building fine longboats. The Kelabit and Lun Bawang who literally means "people of the place or country" are the hill people inhabiting the land beyond the navigable limits of the Baram, Limbang and Trusan rivers. Most of them reside in longhouses and Kampungs. Majority of them are followers of Christianity but some of them are still pagans or being converted into Islam faith.

Orang Ulu are generally disciplined and courteous people. They have been endowed with music and dancing culture since time immemorial.

5) *The Melanau*

The Melanau, often refer themselves as "A-Likou" which means "people of the river" mainly occupy along the coastal belt of the land extending from the mouth of the Rajang River (Sarikei Division) to the mouth of the Baram River (Miri Division) and extending inland some twenty miles from the sea. It was believed that their ancestors came from Bali Island, Indonesia more than 500 years ago. Another group of Melanau ancestors were the Malays from Brunei when Mukah and the surrounding areas were under Brunei rule. Some Melanaus also live in the upriver areas of the Batang Rajang. The Melanau language is divided into 4 major dialect groups namely Rajang area (Belawai, Rajang, Jerijeh, Igan, Bukit Kinyau and Selalang), Paloh/Daro/Matu area, Mukah/Dalat area and Balingian/Tatau/Bintulu area. Very often, these groups experience difficulty in understanding each other's dialect especially Bintulu Melanau dialect which differs to a high degree from that of the Mukah Melanau.

Generally, they can be categorised into three subgroups: pagan, Muslims and Christian Melanaus. The Melanaus have traditionally been associated with the production of raw sago and fishing. However, today many of them involve themselves in business and plantations. A number of them are being employed in the civil service and private sectors.

6) *The Chinese*

The Chinese is ranked as the second largest community in Sarawak. They can be found in all the divisions of Sarawak centralising in the towns and other urban areas. Most Chinese in Sarawak originated from the province of Fujian and Guangdong in South China. Chinese contacts with Borneo including Sarawak stretch over a period of more than 1,000 years. Most of the early contacts, however, were primarily for barter trading. Although some Chinese came to Sarawak well before the arrival of Sir James Brooke in 1841, the major Chinese immigrants actually came after 1841 especially when the Brooke regime needed more people to develop Sarawak in all fields. Most of them are traders and businessmen. However, those who stay in the rural areas are small estate farmers, fishermen and miners. The major Chinese dialect

groups in Sarawak are Foochow, Hakka (Kheh), Hokkien, Teochew, Cantonese, Henghua and Hainanese.

7) *The Indians*

The Indians constitute less than one percent of the population of Sarawak. However, they came to the shore of Sarawak as early as the 12th century for barter trading with the

natives in the State. During the colonial rule, small groups of Indian migrants came to work in the coffee and tea plantations at Matang. A small number of Punjabi were recruited then to join the police force. The last batch of Indian migration occurred after World War II. The Indians in Sarawak comprise of Tamil, Punjabi, Malayalam, Tegulu and Bengali.



*Ethnic Groups
of Sarawak.*

CHAPTER 3

HISTORY OF EARLY SARAWAK

I. INTRODUCTION

Owing to the lack of sufficient archaeological investigations in the past, the early history of Sarawak is almost unknown. However, since 1948 extensive and systematic archaeological work has been carried out in Sarawak by the Sarawak Museum. As a result, Hindu and Buddha figures as well as gold ornaments have been found predominantly in the Sarawak River Basin. The Pagan Bidayuhs (Land Dayak) in Kuching and Samarahan Divisions, by the name of their god Jewata (Hindu deva) showed that at one time they were likely brought into intimate contact with the Hindus from India. Hence, the above evidence suggested that Sarawak might have been visited and probably settled down by the Indians or by the Javanese Hindus. At the same time, the foreign traders who came to Sarawak or Borneo not only left behind evidence of their more obvious pursuits such as ceramics and iron slags but also that of their spiritual beliefs and practices.

The occurrence of gold in Borneo was known to the Hindu and later to the Chinese population as early as the 4th Century A.D. Gold ornaments found in an archaeological site at Santubong are associated with the Chinese pottery and Hindu ornaments dated from about the

12th Century. Gold has long been worked in the area extending from Upper Sarawak (Bau) south-westward to Sambas and Montrado in West Borneo dated from about 1760. It seemed that Borneo gold was known in the days of the great Indian trading expeditions and, therefore, it had been considered to be an important metal in Borneo in the olden days.

The history of Sarawak goes as far back as 40,000 years ago to the Stone Age with the earliest signs of man found in the famous Niah Cave in Miri Division. These early people were food gatherers and hunters using very crude tools known as choppers. They probably lived in small groups and already knew the use of fire. Archaeological and other related works indicated that a small-scale of barter trading prior to the 6th Century A.D. in Borneo grew to a larger scale traffic with both China and Siam (Thailand) by the 12th and 13th Century and, in Sarawak, at the area around Santubong as early as the 11th Century. There is sufficient evidence to indicate that Sarawak River Delta was an important trading centre which was established as early as in the 7th Century A.D. In the 8th Century Arabian princes sent their emissaries to collect the world's best camphor from Borneo.

Old Map of South East Asia



*Buddha figure
in the Gupta
tradition found
at Bukit Maras,
Santubong.*



II. INFLUENCE OF BUDDHISM AND HINDUISM

Both in the Buddhist Kingdom of Srivijaya, centred in Sumatra from the 8th to 13th Century and Hindu-Javanese Majapahit Empire had exerted a strong Buddhist and Hindu influence especially in the Sarawak River Delta and coastal areas of Sarawak. This can be proved with the discoveries of the following figures and shrine. A stone monument of the Buddhist Tantric Shrine built on a raised platform was discovered at Bongkissam, an excavation site located at the foot of Gunung Santubong in 1967. In the sanctuary of the Shrine, a silver deposit box containing gold

ornaments in the shape of a sitting Buddha, crescent moon, elephant, turtle and snake were also discovered. This relic had been dated to about 12th Century A.D. According to the archaeologists, the practice of burying deposit boxes was a Hindu-Buddhist tradition originated from India.

Some forty rock-carvings had been discovered along Sungai Jaong in the Sarawak River Delta, Santubong. The most prominent was a half life-size spread-eagle figure with a curious 'head-dress' was discovered in 1886. It was believed that the carving was in existence in 970 A.D.

Besides, a statue of the elephant-headed god, the Ganesa, was found in Limbang in 1921 and the second piece was discovered at Bukit Berhala in Samarahan in 1848. The third piece was found in Limbang at the site of its Residency in 1921. At the same site, a Batu Lesong which was a Symbolic Phallus of veneration of the Hindu



*Rock carving
of Hindu
influence
found at
Sungai
Jaong
Santubong.*

A scene painted by Hasbie Choe shows the early history of trading at the foot of the Santubong Mountain.



Pallavas in South India was also discovered at Bukit Berhala. Remains of a stone bull were found near Sempu, Penrissen in the early 1840s which represented the guardian outside a temple of Siva. All these remains constituted the oldest known relics of religions and worships in Sarawak.

III. EARLY TRADE CONTACT

Strong archaeological evidence indicated that the island of Borneo began to attract foreign traders to its shores by the 11th century A.D. onwards. The archaeologists of Sarawak Museum discovered the remains of a trading village of about one thousand years old at Santubong excavation site. The traders who came mostly from China and India brought such goods as ceramics wares, metal objects and ornaments to exchange for local products such as rhinoceros' horns, turtle eggs, kingfishers' feathers, birds' nests,

hornbill ivory, bezoar stones and other jungle produces.

There are reasons as to why Borneo attracted the foreign merchants during this early period. Firstly, the island is situated close to the passage through which all those seeking commercial contact with China had to pass. Secondly, it is an island rich in natural

resources, many of an exotic nature, which were highly desired by the cosmopolitan elites in China, India and the Middle East in the olden days.

Many thousand ceramics shreds had been recovered from some 40 proto-historic sites so far conducted by the staff of the Sarawak Museum in Sarawak since 1948. The ceramics excavated from 1948 to 1967, in association with other related material like gold objects, ancient glass beads, Chinese coins and other relics, particularly from sites in the Sarawak River Delta and Gedong, all dated to the Song and Yuan periods (from 11th to 14th centuries A.D.). Since 1967, however, new ceramic material of recent periods in sufficient quantity has also been recovered from other sites in the western part of Sarawak. In view of this evidence, it is reasonable to assume that maritime trade was established in this part of Borneo from the 11th century A.D. to the 19th century A.D.

*Cheng Ho
statue at his
temple, Batu
Kawa,
Kuching.*



In association with the trade ceramic items, large quantities of iron slag together with tube-like crucibles, used in smelting iron, were also found widely distributed all over the excavation sites in the Sarawak River Delta. This indicated that there was an active iron-smelting industry in operation in this part of Borneo at that time. The development of the iron industry could have been caused by the shortage of bronze, especially after the Tang Dynasty, which prompted the Chinese to search for other metals elsewhere.

The Sarawak River Delta was therefore the site not only of an important trading post but also of an iron-smelting centre. The delta area developed and thrived from as early as the 11th century A.D. and

continued until the 14th century when it was mysteriously abandoned.

IV. ADVANCEMENT OF ISLAM

With the fall of Srivijaya about 13th century later and Majapahit Empire in the early 15th century, the Muslim States were established by the advance of Islam into the archipelago.

After the fall of Majapahit Empire, Sarawak formed part of the dominance of the Malay Sultan of Brunei. During the rule of the Brunei Sultanate from 16th to 19th century Sarawak was also known as "the Land of Perfection" (Darul Hana). In actual fact, when Sultan of Brunei took over the control of Sarawak, Sarawak Malays had already established their settlements in Santubong (Sarawak) where Datu Merpati Jepang was the leader, Saribas (Pusa) where Dato Godam Ibnu Bendahara Harun and



*Datu Merpati Jepang,
Santubong.*

*Cheng Ho
Road,
Kuching.*



his followers from Sumatra had settled down there, Kalaka and Samarahan areas. The discovery of 138 rare artifacts believed to be 800 years old produced during the Chinese Sung Dynasty in the 11th Century at Kampung Senangeh, Sadong Jaya in Simunjan on 24.9.1997 was a concrete evidence of the early human settlement in Samarahan area in the olden days. It was obvious that after Sarawak formed the southern province of Brunei that Imperial Admiral Cheng Ho, the famous Chinese trade ambassador of Ming Dynasty (1368 - 1644) visited Brunei. In order to honour this great man, a road between Tun Jugah Road and Rock Road and a Chinese Temple at Batu Kawa in Kuching are named after Cheng Ho.

In 1521 through the visits to Brunei by Pigafetta, of Jorge de Menezes in 1526 and of Consalvo Pereira, the Portuguese explorer in 1530 and by an early map of the East Indies by Mercator, the name of Sarawak was made known to the world. At that time, it was the name of a village and the river of the same name - Sungai Sarawak occupying more or less the same position as the present State Capital, Kuching.

V. FIRST SULTAN AND FIRST CAPITAL OF SARAWAK

According to the history of Brunei, there was a strong indication that Santubong was the first capital of Sarawak in the late 16th century when Pengiran Tengah Ibnu Sultan Muhamad Hassan, the second



*The
Mausoleum
of Sultan
Pengiran
Tengah along
Jalan Sultan
Tengah,
Damai.*



*Datu Patinggi Ali,
Lidah Tanah.*

son of the third Sultan of Brunei became the first and the last Sultan of Sarawak. Sultan Pengiran Tengah became the Sultan of Sarawak in 1599. Before sailing to Johore and Pahang, he appointed Datu Patinggi Seri Setia, Datu Shahbandar Indera Wangsa, Datu Amar Seri Diraja and Datu Temenggong Laila Wangsa as the State Ministers to administer Sarawak. On his way back from Johore, Sultan Pengiran Tengah was shipwrecked near the coast of Sukadana. In Sukadana, he married a princess of the Sukadana Ruler. On his way back to Sarawak, Sultan Pengiran Tengah passed away at Batu Buaya and was buried at Santubong in 1641. His mausoleum is located at the junction of Jalan Sultan

Tengah and Jalan Kampung Santubong in Kuching. It was restored and declared as a historical monument in Sarawak on 11.3.1993. Costing RM546,000.00, the mausoleum was constructed and completed in May 1995.

Upon the death of Sultan Pengiran Tengah, there was no record to show that the Sultan of Brunei had ever sent a replacement for Sultan Pengiran Tengah. The administration of Sarawak affairs could have been placed under the State Ministers such as Datu Patinggi Seri Setia, Datu Shahbandar Indera Wangsa, Datu Amar Seri Diraja and Datu Temenggong Laila Wangsa. Based on the historical record of Brunei, around 1820 Sultan Muhammed Kanzul Alam summoned Pengiran Mohd. Salleh who stayed in Sambas to return to Brunei and conferred him the title of Pengiran Indera Mahkota. Seven years later when the Sultan of Brunei heard that there was a discovery of antimony in Upper Sarawak (Siniawan), he sent Pengiran Indera Mahkota to Sarawak as the Governor of Sarawak. At that time, the capital of Sarawak which was shifted from Santubong was well established at Lidah Tanah situated at Kuala Sungai Sarawak Kanan by Datu Patinggi Ali. It was Pengiran Indera Mahkota who shifted the second capital of Sarawak from Lidah Tanah within Bau district to a place called Sungai Kuching which is the present site of Kuching City.

CHAPTER 4

HISTORY OF MODERN SARAWAK

I. INTRODUCTION

It was in the middle of the nineteenth century that the Brunei Sultanate, possibly the oldest surviving political unit in the whole of Borneo at that time, came increasingly under Western interference, demands and dominance. But it was during this period of high imperialism and Western dominance that the written sources of Sarawak history began. Sad but true, the curious and increasingly acquisitive Westerners around Borneo were the ones who provided early sources of Sarawak history.

The name 'Sarawak' spelt 'Cerava', appeared in some written sources as early as at the beginning of the sixteenth century. However, it was then a province of Brunei, and was left largely in the control of Brunei Pengirans. Despite of our archaeological findings at Niah Caves, more activities and human development took place around Kuching as well as the present Kuching and Samarahan Divisions. Of course, other divisions were also being peopled by the Ibans and other indigenous migrations from Kapuas and other parts of present-day Kalimantan, Indonesia. In other words, settlements had occurred not only at suitable coastal areas and tributaries but also along the upper reaches of rivers, such as the Rajang, Baram, Kemena and Mukah Rivers, where earlier people such as the

Punans, Muruts, Kelabits, Kenyahs and Kayans were pushed further inland by the Ibans, Melanaus, Sarawak Malays and Brunei noblemen. One might consider the pushing around of one ethnic group by another as a kind of premodern indigenous imperialism in Sarawak; but the fact was that the various ethnic groups were not very far different from one another. In spite of a number of religious, pantheistic and cultural divergences, the salient point was that the different indigenous people of Sarawak were increasingly learning from one another as their perforce came into contact whether through war, head-hunting or more peaceful co-existence later.

In the 15th century, Brunei Darussalam - Abode of Peace was the centre of a mighty empire which encompassed much of Borneo Island. The coming of James Brooke signalled the start of the gradual loss of Brunei's territory in South Borneo, to a new entity ruled by Brooke Regime i.e. Sarawak. Over a period of lengthy years from 1841-1905, Brunei waned and its wealth as well as territories disappeared until it became no larger then it is now. In an effort to prevent the country from disappearing altogether as an entity, Brunei became a British protectorate in 1906. In 1984, Brunei became independence and was able to

regain full sovereignty over its own affair over a land area of 5,700 square kilometres.

Although Brunei claimed the whole of present-day Sarawak as her territory, in actual fact, the Sultanate had very little influence and effective control of even the lower riverine and coastal settlements. The Brunei Pengirans who were the representatives of the Sultan usually governed fairly limited areas; and certainly the further the ethnic groups were from the coastal areas, the more remote and independent the indigenous people were from Brunei or the Pengiran's authority and demands.

This kind of independence from the central authority or the habit of ethnic groups being able to make decisions for themselves without replying upon others, had become a strong and persistent feature of the life and history of many, if not all, of the indigenous people of Sarawak. But it was during the early part of Brooke's rule that the pride and spirit of independence among Sarawak people were demonstrated clearly and repeatedly.

II. SARAWAK UNDER SIR JAMES BROOKE

We have to accept the fact that the modern history of Sarawak really began with the first landing of James Brooke on 15.8.1839. At that time, Sarawak was the southern province of the Brunei Sultanate. Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin was a man of weak character and had no control over his



*Sir James Brooke
the first white
Rajah of
Sarawak from
1841 - 1868.*

relatives who were intriguing against each other. Because his weak government was not stable and his power gradually declined, there was a social unrest, as it was the case in Sarawak. The Governor, appointed by the Sultan to administer Sarawak, was Pengiran Indera Makota who was intelligent but selfish, greedy and cruel. Sarawak was governed by corruption and extortion which caused great sufferings to the people. The cruel and inhuman treatment by the Governor from Brunei, Pengiran Indera Mahkota, who forced the Malays and Land Dayaks (Bidayus) to extract antimony like slaves in Siniawan, Upper Sarawak (Bau) stirred up Anti-Brunei feeling among the locals. The Malay Hero, Datu Patinggi Ali, led an Anti-Brunei force against Pengiran Indera

*Sultan Omar
Ali Saifuddin
II of Brunei.*



Mahkota in 1835. In spite of the fact that the Sultan of Brunei Omar Ali Saifuddin II sent his uncle, Pengiran Muda Hashim, the Bendahara of Brunei, to pacify the country, the revolt continued because Pengiran Indera Mahkota refused to listen to Pengiran Muda Hashim. The Brunei Governor carried on with his exploitation and exaction of the local people. Thus, the situation remained riotous. James Brooke departed Sarawak after a short stay and he returned on 29.8.1840 to find the fighting was still in progress. At the request of Pengiran Muda Hashim and at the same time to fulfill his own dream of having a kingdom in the east, James Brooke interceded in the dispute and finally he brought about a peaceful settlement. James Brooke was rewarded for his service and he was given the territory of about 18,000 square

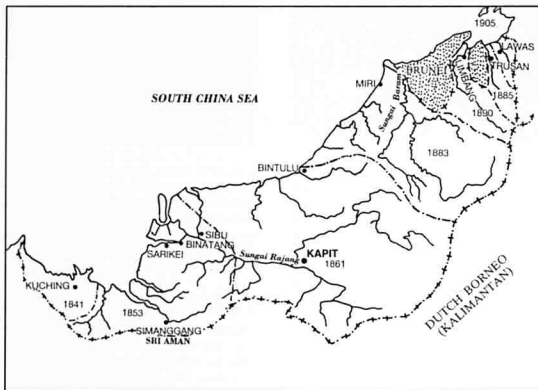


*Raja Muda
Hashim.*

kilometres stretching from Tanjung Datu to Samarahan River and inland up to Upper Sarawak (Bau) by Pengiran Muda Hashim on 24.9.1841. On 1.8.1842, James Brooke was proclaimed as the White Rajah of Sarawak at Brunei and he was installed to the throne in Kuching on 18.9.1842.

Being a foreigner who became the Rajah of the land which had already been inhabited by the multi-racial communities comprising of the Dayaks, Malays and Chinese, James Brooke had a difficult time extending his influence and exercising his power over the people in Sarawak. Although the cruel administrators of Brunei had departed, the new ruler in the person of James Brooke himself had similarly imposed taxes and restrictions on his subjects. As a

*Map showing the Extension of Sarawak Territory
from 1841 - 1905*





*Rentap, Ulu
Skrang/Saribas.*

whole, the people of Sarawak did not want a foreign power to administer their own land. To Sarawakians, James Brooke was nothing more than a pirate himself, a man who seized the land and took taxes from the people of Sarawak. Moreover, they hated James Brooke who brought in foreigners to rule them. Even in England, the famous radical Member of Parliament, Mr. Joseph Hume and Mr. Richard Cobden charged James Brooke for murdering innocent natives in Sarawak. The Brooke anti-tribe expeditions killed more innocent souls, burned kampungs, longhouses and destroyed properties as well as the crops of the local people. For the remaining twenty-three years of his life, James Brooke who was not contended to rule over a small riverside town of Kuching devoted



*Liu Shanbang,
Bau.*

himself to expand his territory, the suppression of "piracy", head-hunting, Anti-White Rajah movements and Anti-Brooke's Rule by the Malays, Dayak and Chinese communities. The following heroes from various communities in Sarawak were actually the champions of the people of Sarawak who clearly demonstrated their true feelings against white men's rule over them.

1) Iban Hero Rentap Against Brooke Rule

For a period of 17 years, from August 1844 until 1861, Rajah James Brooke had to fight against sea-faring Saribas and Skrang Ibans, especially the Iban Hero, Rentap. Rentap was a native of Skrang and he never wanted Rajah

James Brooke to rule over his people. He first fought against the White Rajah at Skrang in August 1844 and in 1853. He successfully attacked Nanga Skrang Fort where his son-in-law, Layang, killed Alan Lee of the Rajah's force. In August 1854, James Brooke, with a force of 7,000 attacked and over-ran Rentap at Sungai Lang but Rentap and his followers retreated strategically to the top of Bukit Sadok. On 2.4.1857, Charles Brooke led an attack on Bukit Sadok with a strong force of 4,000 but failed to penetrate Rentap's stronghold. The following year, a larger expedition of Charles Brooke also failed despite the use of a six-pounder gun. It was not until September 1861 when Charles Brooke returned with a twelve-pounder gun that he finally defeated Rentap and destroyed his Belian stockade at Bukit Sadok on 28.10.1861. Although Rentap's power was eventually broken, he did not surrender. He and his followers retreated to Entabai, Kanowit where he died of old age sometime in the 1870s. He was remembered as a great hero and a determined defender of Sarawak.

2) *Chinese Hero Liu Shanbang refused to be ruled by Brooke Regime*

The Chinese miners in Bau who arrived in Sarawak 20 years earlier than James Brooke and had formed a self-established government in Bau also refused to be ruled by a foreigner. James Brooke restricted their freedom of trade in opium, wine and other necessities with

foreign countries and prohibited them from exporting gold and other local products to overseas besides imposing taxes on them based on the actual population. On 19.2.1857, the Anti-Rajah movement led by the freedom fighter, Liu Shanbang, from Bau Lama, had successfully conquered Astana Kuching for a few days but Rajah James Brooke managed to escape. However, Rajah James Brooke together with his nephew, Charles Brooke, who had brought a strong force from Second Division (Sri Aman), counter-attacked the Chinese fighters. In the end, Liu Shanbang was killed at Jugan on or about 24.2.1857. He was a hero who did not want a foreign rule and he died for the sake of defending the sovereignty of the country. In actual fact, Liu Shanbang became the *de facto* Rajah of Sarawak for 5 days from 19.2.1857 to 23.2.1857.

3) *Malay Hero Sherip Masahor fought against Brooke Authority*

The Chinese Anti-Rajah movement had been sudden and dramatic. More serious was the disaffection of Malay nobles who were resentful of restrictions upon their privileges and power. Rajah James Brooke retained most of the influential and respected Malays in office, though some of them watched eagerly for his weakness. Knowing that the old Malay ruling class was an alternative to his government, Rajah James Brooke did not trust them, an attitude even shared by Rajah Charles Brooke later.



Sherip Masahor, Sarikei.

In 1853 when Sultan Abdul Mumin of Brunei ceded the Lower Rajang Basin to Rajah James Brooke, the Governor of the area was Sherip Masahor. Rajah James Brooke retained Sherip Masahor in his position but he paid little attention and continued to act in the semi-independent manner as usual. In actual fact, Sherip Masahor was a Malay patriot who was deadly against Rajah James Brooke's attempts to rule over Sarawak. The proclamation of James Brooke as the White Rajah of Sarawak in 1841 bewildered and angered Sherip Masahor. When James Brooke began to swallow up more territories of the Sultanate of Brunei, Sherip Masahor together with Datu Patinggi Gapur planned to attack



Sawing, Kanowit

Kuching but they failed. Datu Patinggi Gapur was sent to Mecca for pilgrimage whereas Sherip Masahor returned to Sarikei quietly.

In 1855, when Sherip Masahor intervened in a dispute between two rival Pengirans namely Pengiran Ersat and Pengiran Matusin at Mukah, he was fined by the second White Rajah Sir Charles Brooke. After several abortive attempts for freedom against Brooke Rule, Sherip Masahor was banished to Singapore where he spent the rest of his life. The Hero Sherip Masahor died in February 1890, in Singapore still full of determination to push the British out of Sarawak.

4) *Orang Ulu Hero Sawing who was deadly against Brooke Reign*

During the same period, an Orang Ulu Hero in the person of Sawing who was also deadly against the rule of Brooke Regime. On 7.6.1859, Sawing killed two Brooke's officials i.e. Mr. Charles Fox and Mr. Henry Steele in Kanowit. However, in December 1863 after four years of fighting against the Brooke authority, he gave up himself to the intruder in order to avoid further bloodshed of the innocent Kayan people and the destruction of their properties by the Brooke's force. The Hero Sawing was executed by the merciless intruder - the Brooke authority.



Sir Charles Brooke, the second white Rajah of Sarawak from 1868 - 1917.

Sarawak Territory Further Enlarged

Sarawak was recognised as an independent state by the United States of America on 24.10.1850 and Great Britain granted recognition and appointed Mr. G.T. Ricketts as the British Consul on 19.1.1864. On 24.8. 1853, upon the demand for more land by Brooke Regime the territory of Sarawak was further enlarged when the Sultan of Brunei ceded all the land between Sadong River to Oya River. On 11.8.1861, the territory of Sarawak was further extended when the Sultan of Brunei ceded all rivers and lands from Oya River to Kidurong, Bintulu to the Brooke Regime who never satisfied with whatever territory surrendered by the Brunei authority.

III. SARAWAK UNDER SIR CHARLES BROOKE

When Sir James Brooke died in England on 11.6.1868 at the age of 65, he bequeathed to his nephew, Charles Brooke who was proclaimed as the second White Rajah of Sarawak on 3.8.1868. Sir Charles Brooke in his long reign of fifty years built upon the foundation laid by his uncle, ruled with such conspicuous success that "piracy" disappeared, head-hunting was reduced and the prosperity of the country increased. He was an excellent administrator who set up a proper system of government, gradually expanding and swallowing more territories from the weak and powerless Sultan of Brunei. In order not to confuse the name of the capital of Sarawak and the State of Sarawak, Sir Charles Brooke announced Kuching as the official name of the capital on 12.8.1872. British protection was accorded to Sarawak on 13.6.1888.

Sir Charles Vyner Brooke, the third white Rajah of Sarawak from 1917 - 1946.



Prince Maide of Japan who visited Sarawak during Japanese occupation.

On 19.6.1882, further large accretions of territory occurred when the frontier was advanced beyond Batang Baram from Kidurong. The agreement of accretion was signed by Sultan Abdul Mumin and Rajah Charles Brooke in Brunei on 13.6.1883. On 3.1.1885, the valley of Trusan River was ceded and on 17.3.1890 Batang Limbang was annexed to Sarawak at the request of the local people from Limbang. On 5.1.1905, the Lawas River area was taken from the British North Borneo Company with the consent of the British Government.

IV. SARAWAK UNDER SIR CHARLES VYNER BROOKE

Sir Charles Brooke died on 17.5.1917 at the age of 88. The third White Rajah, Sir Charles Vyner Brooke succeeded his father on 24.5.1917 and progress continued in all spheres. In 1941,

the centenary year of the Brooke rule, the State was in a sound economic position with a large sum of money in reserve. As a centenary gesture, the Rajah enacted a new constitution, which abrogated his absolute powers and set the feet of the people of Sarawak on the first step towards the road to a democratic self-government. However, the 1941 constitution did not immediately prove conducive to political progress, but it at least helped to familiarize the people of Sarawak the ideal of liberal and democratic self-government.

Shortly after the Century celebrations, Sir Charles Vyner Brooke and his family cowardly fled to Sydney, Australia to escape from Japanese invasion. This was very revealing of the third White Rajah's lack of commitment to Sarawak, further confirmed by his decision to cede the State to Great Britain in 1946. He passed away in England on 9.5.1963 at the age of 88.

V. JAPANESE OCCUPATION (1941 - 1945)

On 8.12.1941, when the Japanese attacked the U.S. Naval Base at Pearl Harbour, Hawaii, both U.S.A. and Britain declared war on Japan, thus the outbreak of the Pacific War spread over to Sarawak. On 16.12.1941, the Japanese invaders occupied Miri.

The bombing of Kuching Town on 19.12.1941 signalled the beginning of the tragic and terror years under the Japanese Occupation. Bombs fell along Ban Hock Road to the wharf of Borneo Company causing fire around the area as well as 33 deaths and 78 injuries due to air raid. The Japanese authority occupied Kuching on 24.12.1941 and took all

the Europeans and other local inhabitants suspected of destroying important installations in Kuching as prisoners. Chief Secretary of Sarawak, Captain Le Gros Clark had to stay back to shoulder the responsibility and to await events. Many of the European government officers who had wives and children in the country decided to stay behind. They were all taken prisoners and like the other prisoners of war suffered atrocious treatment under the Japanese. The Prisoners of War Camp at the present site of the Batu Lintang Teachers' Training College, Kuching, housed several thousands of them and more than a thousand died there. Kuching town suffered immensely due to lack of food supply and other basic necessities.

This house at No. 1, Jawa Road Kuching served as the Japanese Headquarters during the occupation period (1941-1945).



During the three years and eight months of the Japanese occupation, the administrative and economic infrastructures were severely damaged and the civilian population suffered much hardship. The local people were reduced to poverty and misery and malnutrition spread throughout the State. The local people looked upon the Japanese invaders with distrust and anger because of their cruelty and greed and, hence, Anti-Japanese sentiment widespread throughout the length and breadth of Sarawak. Even just before the end of the war, the Japanese forces carried out major arrests and killed many more people. The Chief Secretary of Sarawak, Captain Le Cros Clark, and Consul Dr. Cho Wan Lai, the Chinese Consul of North Borneo (Sabah), together with three other European prisoners were taken to North Borneo (Sabah) and brutally killed at Keningau on 6.7.1945.

The landings of the British and Australian Paratroops in the Kelabit highland in Miri Division in early 1945 received excellent response and support from the people there. Hence, it paved the way for the major Allied landings on Labuan and along the north-west coast of Sarawak as far down as Miri in June, 1945. Eventually, the Japanese surrendered unconditionally on 14.8.1945.

VI. AUSTRALIAN MILITARY ADMINISTRATION

When the Japanese sought in armistice on 15.8.1945, all regular resistance ceased. The Allied Force under Major General Wooten entered Kuching on 11.9.1945 to receive the formal surrender of the Japanese

Army. Kuching was liberated and about 2,500 prisoners were set free on the Liberation Day.

Sarawak was then placed under Australian Military Administration for about seven months until 14.4.1946. The main task of the military administration was to oversee the distribution of rice and other essential commodities to the local population. During this period, the constabulary reformed and the medical as well as educational services were reorganised.

VII. SARAWAK AS A BRITISH COLONY (1946-1963)

When peace was restored, the third White Rajah Sir Charles Vyner Brooke, came back from Australia and resumed his authority over the State of Sarawak on 15.4.1946. It had, however, for sometime been evident for him that greater financial resources were needed to restore Sarawak even a semblance of her former prosperity. Perhaps the consequence of Japanese Occupation was the effective termination of Brooke's Rule and Sir Charles Vyner Brooke's disinterest in continuing the Brooke legacy over Sarawak.

When Sir Charles Vyner Brooke announced his intention to cede Sarawak to Britain in early 1946, the British Government sent two Malay speaking Members of Parliament namely the honourable Mr. D.R. Ree Williams and Mr. L.D. Gammans to Sarawak to ascertain whether the people wanted cession. The finding was that there was sufficient support for the question of cession to be put before the Council Negri. The motion

*Sir Charles
Arden Clarke, First
G.C.M.G. First
British
Colonial
Governor of
Sarawak.*



was subsequently debated for three days in the Council Negri. The Bill of Cession was read for the third time on 17.5.1946 and was passed by nineteen votes against sixteen. The Bill was in fact carried mostly by the votes of the European members who were not the local people of Sarawak. By an Order-in-Council, Sarawak became a British Colony on 1.7.1946. After Sarawak had become a Colony, the Council Negri and Supreme Council remained as constituted before the war, but with the Governor taking over the place of the Rajah.

For a period of 17 years under the British Colonial Rule, four British Governors had been appointed to rule Sarawak. They were:-

- 1) Sir Charles Arden Clarke (Period from 29.10.1946 to 26.7.1949)
- 2) Mr. Duncan Stewart (Period from 14.11.1949 to 10.12.1949)



*Mr. Duncan
Stewart, Second
British
Colonial
Governor of
Sarawak.*

- 3) Sir Anthony Abell (Period from 3.4.1950 to 14.11.1959)
- 4) Sir Alexander Waddell (Period from 23.2.1960 to 15.9.1963). He passed away in England on 14.6.1999 at the age 85.

VIII. ANTI-CESSION MOVEMENT

In actual fact, the end of the Japanese Occupation in 1945 sowed the seeds of nationalisms. The people in Sarawak had been divided over the question of Cession and the passing of the motion by a narrow European majority in Council Negri did not end the issue. In order to resist the authoritarian decision of the third White Rajah, a major protest was organised by the Malay National Union. A total of 338 government officers and teachers, most of them with long years of

*Sir Anthony
Abell,
G.C.M.G.
Third British
Colonial
Governor of
Sarawak.*



*Sir Alexander
Waddell,
G.C.M.G.
Fourth British
Colonial
Governor of
Sarawak.*



service, resigned from the government in protest against the colonial government's instruction not to take part in political activity.

Datu Patinggi Haji Abdillah bin Datu Bandar Abang Haji Kassim opposed most strongly to the cession of Sarawak to Britain. The Sarawak Government had given him a sum of \$12,000 (Sarawak dollars) but he returned the money considering it as a bribe. His house known as Darul Kurnia built in 1947 at Haji Taha Road became the assembly place for the anti-cessionists. In June 1949, his descendants sold it to Mr. Ong Kuan Hin for \$30,000/- who handed over to the Sarawak Chinese Charitable Trust Board in 1972. The Trust Board in turn

rented it to Chung Hua School Administration for \$100/- per month until 31.5.2002. It is now used as Chung Hua Middle School No. 4, along the present Haji Taha Road, Kuching.



*Chung Hua
Middle School
No. 4 - Darul
Kurnia
Building,
Kuching.*



*Rosli Dhoby,
Sibu.*

The climax came on 3.12.1949 when the second British Governor of Sarawak, Mr. Duncan Stewart, was stabbed in Sibu by a young Malay student-teacher, our hero Rosli bin Dhoby, using a Kris greased with poison and the Governor died a week later in Singapore on 10.12.1949. Being an idealistic young man, he believed he could end the colonial rule by killing the British Governor. In the end, the heroes Rosli bin Dhoby, Awang Rambli, Morshidi bin Sidek and Bujang bin Suntong who were involved with the assassination were convicted and sentenced to death for their patriotic act towards the country. The anti-cession movement showed the awakening of political consciousness in Sarawak. The people of Sarawak were determined to control their own future and destiny. This was the beginning of the spirit of nationalism in the State.



*Tunku Abdul Rahman
Putra Al-Haj.*

IX. 1962 BRUNEI REVOLT

On 8.12.1962, a revolt broke out in Brunei. It was led by A.M. Azahari who hoped to find enough support in Brunei, Sarawak and Sabah (then known as British North Borneo) to overthrow all the three governments and unite the three territories. A.M. Azahari was deadly against the formation of Malaysia. He found little support in some areas in Miri and Limbang Divisions in Sarawak and his force seized Limbang and areas around Niah and Sibuti in Miri Division.

However, with little support from the local people and prompt action by the British troops stationed in Singapore, the British commandos recaptured the above areas from the poorly armed force of A.M. Azahari on



*Tunku Abdul Rahman
proclaiming
Malaya's
Independence
on 31.8.1957.*

12.12.1962. The Rebellion was a total failure and the rebels retreated towards the Indonesian border.

X. FORMATION OF MALAYSIA

In May 1961, the Prime Minister of Malaya, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj, put forward a proposal which was to change the whole course of Sarawak's future. This proposal centred upon the formation of Malaysia, a federation to include Malaya, Singapore, Sarawak, Sabah and Brunei. Slowly the idea became more acceptable

particularly as it became understood that Malaya and Singapore were prepared to concede certain safeguards to protect the interests of the Borneo territories. In a series of meetings, Sarawak delegates met with delegates from the other territories and participated actively in the working out of details of such safeguards. These 'Malaysia Solidarity Consultative Committee' meetings gave Borneo delegates much useful experience in political bargaining. Eight members of Sarawak Council Negri attended the first meeting of the Committee in Kuala Lumpur on 6.1.1962.

Meanwhile, the Colonial Government had declared its support for the Malaysia Plan provided the people of Sarawak found it acceptable. A Commission of Enquiry was appointed under the Right Hon. Lord Cobbold to ascertain the feelings of the people of Borneo. The Cobbold Commission arrived in Kuching in February 1962. The Commission issued an open invitation to all interested persons to give oral evidence and also collected a large volume of written memoranda from associations, political parties, Chambers of Commerce, community leaders and individuals.

The conclusion of the Commission showed that about a third of the population was strongly in favour of the formation of Malaysia; another third appeared to favour it on the condition that certain safeguards were

included in the agreement; the remaining third wanted either to remain under British rule for some time or else to obtain full independence before considering joining the Federation.

Soon after this, an Inter-Governmental Committee was set up to work out details of the constitutional arrangements. Sarawak was well represented on this committee with the Council Negri itself selecting the delegates. The report of the Committee paved the way for the successful implementation of the Malaysia proposal. It fully provided for the safeguards demanded by Sabah and Sarawak, and granted the Borneo States a generous allocation of seats in the Federal House of Representatives or Dewan Rakyat - Sarawak was allocated 24 seats. In addition it provided for generous development grants for the East Malaysian States.

Tun Abang Haji Openg witnessed the match past in Kuching on 16.9.1963 in conjunction with the formation of Malaysia.



The attractiveness of the Malaysia proposal became increasingly evident and in March 1963 the Sarawak Council Negri passed a motion adopting the recommendations contained in the Inter-Government Committee Report, and welcoming the creation of the proposed Federation of Malaysia by August 31.

*First Chief
Minister Tan Sri
Datuk Amar
Stephen Kalong
Ningkan.*



*Second Chief
Minister Datuk
Tauai Sit.*



XI. FURTHER CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

Meanwhile, important constitutional changes had taken place to ensure that Sarawak would have a fully democratic legislature and a ministerial system of government before joining Malaysia. As laid down under the 1956 new Constitution the Sarawak Council Negri included 14 official members, 24 members indirectly elected by the people, 4 nominated members and 3 standing members. It gave an unofficial majority to the Council Negri for the first time. The first direct local government elections were held in November that year.

Early in 1963 this Constitution was modified to give Sarawak a fully democratic legislature. The constitutional arrangements

increased the number of elected representatives from 24 to 36 and reduced the official and the nominated members to three persons each.

The new Constitution also provided for a ministerial system of government for the first time. One of the members of Council Negri, the one who in the opinion of the Governor was likely to command the confidence of the majority of the members, would be appointed as the Chief Minister. He in turn would advise the Governor on the appointment of five other members of the Council Negri to the Supreme Council. These members would then take responsibility for Government Departments and be known as Ministers. The remaining three members of the Supreme Council were official members - the Chief Secretary,

*Third Chief
Minister Tun
Datuk Patinggi
Haji Abdul
Rahman Ya'kub.*



Attorney-General and Financial Secretary. When independence came, the Chief Minister would preside over the Supreme Council.

Thus in effect the new Constitution meant that political leaders elected (indirectly) by the people would take over control of the Government from the Colonial Government.

XII. 1963 STATE ELECTIONS

In the light of these constitutional changes, new state elections were held between April and July 1963. The Sarawak Alliance formed by Party Negara Sarawak (PANAS), Sarawak National Party (SNAP), Party Pesaka Sarawak (PESAKA), Barisan Rakyat Jati Sarawak (BARJASA) and Sarawak Chinese Association (SCA) participated in the State Election.



*Fourth and
present Chief
Minister Datuk
Patinggi Tan
Sri (Dr.) Haji
Abdul Taib bin
Mahmud.*

However PANAS withdrew from the Sarawak Alliance on 15.4.1963. Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP) was an opposition party also participated in the general election.

Since Sarawak retained the three-tier system of election, the first stage involved election to Municipal and District Councils, the second stage from District to Divisional Advisory Councils and the final stage from Divisional Advisory Councils to the Council Negri.

After the elections were completed in July 1963, the first meeting of the Sarawak Alliance to form the elected State Government was held at Rumah Malaysia - the villa of Tan Sri Datuk Amar Ling Beng

Siew in Sibiu. Mr. Stephen Kalong Ningkan (Now Tan Sri Datu Amar) of Sarawak National Party (SNAP) was elected Sarawak's first Chief Minister Designate. Later, the members of Sarawak's first State Cabinet were announced. They included two members from SNAP, two from Barisan Rakyat Jati Sarawak (BARJASA) and one from Sarawak Chinese Association (SCA). On 31.8.1963 the British Colonial Governor Sir Alexander Waddell handed over the control of all government affairs to the Chief Minister, Mr. Stephen Kalong Ningkan.

The original date chosen for the formation of Malaysia was on 31.8.1963 but as a result of the opposition of Indonesia and the Philippines, expressed at the Manila Conference on 30.7.1963 to 5.8.1963 Malaysia agreed that the date be postponed in order to allow a United Nations team to ascertain the wishes of the people of the Borneo States.

The mission visited Sarawak and Sabah between 16.8.1963 and 5.9.1963 and in its report it stated that a substantial majority of the population did indeed support the formation of Malaysia. Indonesia, however, refused to accept the conclusion of the report, arguing that the conditions under which it had been carried out were not satisfactory. On 16.9.1963, Sarawak achieved full independence as a member state of the Federation of Malaysia after 17 years under the British Colonial rule. The first local Governor was Tun Abang Haji Openg bin Abang Sapiee.

XIII. THE UNDECLARED WAR- CONFRONTATION (1963-1966)

Before Malaysia was formed, President Sukarno of Indonesia accused the proposed

federation of being neo-colonial and the Philippines Government joined him in opposing the formation of the new nation. In August 1963, the Prime Minister of Malaya, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Ah-Haj, President Sukarno of Indonesia and President Macapagal of the Philippines met in Manila and decided to ask the United Nations to send a team of officials to Sarawak and Sabah to ascertain the wishes of the people about joining Malaysia. The United Nations' report confirmed the majority of the people of Sarawak and Sabah supported the formation of Malaysia.

In spite of the United Nations' finding, President Sukarno continued to show his hostility of offering assistance to militant communist terrorists operating along the Sarawak/Kalimantan border, resulting in numerous skirmishes and loss of life. The first attack by the Indonesians was on 12.4.1963 at 2.00 a.m. at Police Station, Tebedu in which a police corporal was killed and two constables wounded. There were more than 150 attacks by the Indonesians all over Sarawak during confrontation from 12.4.1963 to 19.6.1966. Eventually, confrontation ended on 11.8.1966. However, communist activities were still active especially among the Chinese dominated areas in Sarawak. On the night of 26.6.1965, communists attacked the Police Station at 18th Mile Kuching/Serian Road in which 9 police/field force men were killed. As a result of it, Hammer Operation was mounted and controlled areas were imposed from 15th Mile to 25th Mile Kuching/Serian Road with effect from 6.7.1965. On 30.10.1967, new villages at Siburan, Tapah and Beratok situated along Kuching/Serian Road were completed and all

Chinese families from the areas were required to move into the new villages in order to separate them from the communist influence and, at the same time, to protect them from the communist threat. Consequently, Operation Petek was mounted in 1972 and 1973 to uproot the communist movement. On 26.3.1972, the Rajang Security Command (RASCOC) was established in Batang Rajang area to wipe out the communist influence there.

XIV. SRI AMAN - PEACE RESTORED

On 13.10.1973, Bong Kee Chok, top leader of the North Kalimantan People's Guerilla Force and Director and Political Commissar of PARAKU, personally wrote to the Chief Minister and Director of Operation, Sarawak, YAB Datuk Haji Abdul Rahman Ya'kub, of his desire to abandon the armed struggle and to work for political and social change within the Malaysia Constitution.

On 18.10.1973, 585 men and women including most of the top military and political leaders representing 85 percent of the communist fighting force, emerged from the jungle and laid down their arms. A Memorandum of Understanding between the Chief Minister, YAB Datuk Patinggi Haji Abdul Rahman Ya'kub and Bong Kee Chok, Director and Political Commissar of PARAKU, was signed at Rumah Sri Aman in Simanggang (Sri Aman) on 21.10.1973. The voluntary surrender of members of the Sarawak Communists Organisation, representing 85% of the guerrillas, brought peace and security to Sarawak.

In the morning of 4.3.1974, the then Chief Minister, YAB Datuk Patinggi Haji Abdul Rahman Ya'kub, announced before about 100 representatives of the local and international press and State dignitaries at Dewan Tun Abdul Razak in Kuching that after more than eleven years of communist armed struggle, peace had returned to Sarawak. On 5.3.1980, the Government of Malaysia approved the complete lifting of security restrictions in the Operation Hammer Areas (Siburan, Tapah and Beratok New Villages) along Kuching/Serian Road.

XV. POLITICAL CHANGES 1963 - 1999

During the initial phase of Sarawak's independence within Malaysia, from 1963 to 1966 all important government departments were headed by expatriate officers. The Sarawak Alliance leaders, being entrusted with the heavy responsibility of running a State Government for the first time, invariably turned to the expatriate officers for advice on political matters. This resulted in much political dissatisfaction. In mid 1966, the State Cabinet headed by Datuk Amar Stephen Kalong Ningkan was replaced by a new cabinet with Datuk Tawi Sli as the Chief Minister.

Under Datuk Tawi Sli Government expatriate officers were excluded from the decision-making level and the replacement of top expatriate officers greatly accelerated. The three top posts of State Secretary, State Financial Secretary and State Establishment Officer were taken over by local officers, and all other expatriate officers in the administration were replaced rapidly as well as many of the top expatriates in other departments.

*The first
Sarawakian
Governor, the
late Tun Datuk
Abang Haji
Openg bin
Abang Sapiea.*



Sarawak first direct general election was held on 7.7.1970. The Sarawak Alliance joined forces with the Sarawak United People's Party to form Sarawak first coalition government under the leadership of Datuk Patinggi Haji Abdul Rahman Ya'kub. The Coalition Government was returned to power in 1974 and in September of the same year, SNAP joined PBB and SUPP to form the State Barisan Nasional Government, which was again reelected in 1979. Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Haji Abdul Rahman Ya'kub remained as Chief Minister until his resignation on 26.3.1981. Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud was sworn in as the fourth Chief Minister of Sarawak on the same date.

In July 1983 some Dayak members of SNAP left the party to form Parti Bansa Dayak Sarawak (PBDS) which opted to remain in the



*The second
Sarawakian
Governor, the
late Tun Datuk
Patinggi
Tuanku Haji
Bujang bin
Tuanku Osman.*

Barisan Nasional Government under the Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud.

To counter a plot to oust him as the Chief Minister in March 1987, Datuk Patinggi Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud dissolved the State Legislative Assembly and called for a State election in the following month. PBDS contested as an opposition party. Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud was returned as Chief Minister for a third term leading the State Barisan Government composed of PBB, SUPP and SNAP.

On 28.9.1991, the incumbent Chief Minister was returned for a fourth term of office when the State Barisan Nasional (B.N.) achieved a landslide victory, winning 49 out of a total of 56 seats in the State Legislative

Assembly. On 31.5.1994, Parti Bansa Dayak Sarawak (PBDS) was reaccepted to State Barisan Nasional after some seven years in exile. Due to the increase in voting population and pace of development of the State, the Constitution of the State of Sarawak was amended in order to increase the elected members of the Council Negri from 56 to 62 in October, 1995. In September, 1996 State Election was held and Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr.) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud was returned for a fifth term as the Chief Minister of Sarawak when the State Barisan Nasional won 57 out of 62 seats in the State Election. On 26.10.1997, State Barisan Nasional increased another seat to 58 in the State Legislative Assembly when Mr. Michael Sim Kiam Hui won the Kidurong By-Election after he defeated DAP's candidate and two other independents. The latest breakdown of the seats in Dewan Undangan Negri Sarawak is as follows:-

<u>PARTY</u>	<u>NUMBER OF SEATS</u>
1. State Barisan Nasional (PBB - 29 SUPP - 14 PBDS - 8 SNAP - 7)	58
2. Democratic Action Party (DAP)	2
3. Independent candidate	2
Total:	62



*The third Yang
Dipertua Negri
Tun Datuk
Patinggi Abang
Haji
Muhammad
Salahuddin.*

In December 1999 Parliamentary Election, State Barisan Nasional (BN) contested and won all the 28 parliamentary seats in Sarawak giving a clear mandate for State Barisan Nasional to continue serving the people in Sarawak for the next 5 years in the new millennium.

XVI. HEAD OF STATE FROM 1963

After achieving independence within Malaysia, Sarawak has four Heads of State. Its first Head of State, then known as the Governor, was the late Tun Datuk Abang Haji Openg bin Abang Sapiee from 16.9.1963 until his death on 28.3.1969.

*The fourth Yang
Dipertua Negeri,
Tun Datuk
Patinggi Haji
Abdul Rahman
bin Ya'kub.*



The second Governor was Tun Datuk Patinggi Tuanku Haji Bujang bin Tuanku Osman from 2.4.1969 until he completed his second term of office on 1.4.1977. He was then succeeded by the third Governor Tun Datuk Patinggi Abang Haji Muhammad Salahuddin who was in office from 2.4.1977 till 1.4.1981. The fourth Governor who was



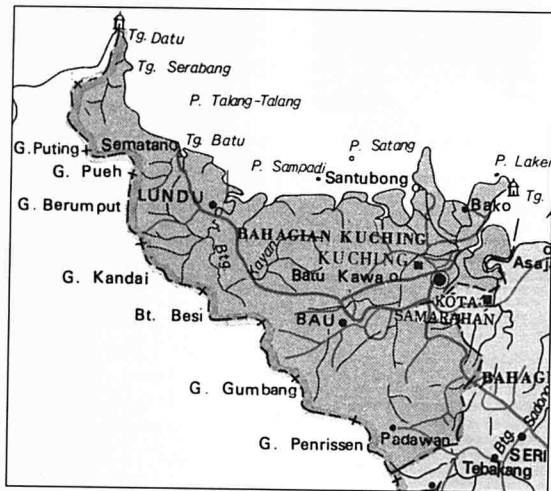
*TYT Tun Datuk
Patinggi Haji
Ahmad Zaidi
Adruce bin
Muhammed
Noor, the
present Yang
Dipertua of
Sarawak.*

then known as Yang di-Pertua Negeri was Tun Datuk Patinggi Haji Abdul Rahman bin Ya'kub who held office of Head of State from 2.4.1981 to 1.4.1985. The present Head of State is Tun Datuk Patinggi Haji Ahmad Zaidi Adruce bin Muhammed Noor who became the fifth Yang di-Pertua Negeri from 2.4.1985 until today.

CHAPTER 5

KUCHING DIVISION

Map of Kuching Division



Kuching - The Cat City and Capital of Sarawak

I. INTRODUCTION

Kuching Division, the First Division of Sarawak, has an area of 4,565 square kilometres and based on 1991 census, it had a population of 429,511. The majority of the people are Chinese, Malays, Bidayus and Ibans.

The Division has three districts and three sub-districts namely:-

Sarawak at Tanjung Datu to the divisional border with Samarahan Division. The name of the towns/bazaars are as follows:-

Lundu District

- 1) Sematan Bazaar
- 2) Lundu Town
- 3) Biawak Bazaar

Bau District

- 4) Serikin Bazaar
- 5) Pangkalan Tebang Bazaar
- 6) Krokong Bazaar
- 7) Taiton Bazaar
- 8) Bidi Bazaar
- 9) Bau Town
- 10) Jambusan Bazaar
- 11) Paku Bazaar
- 12) Siniawan Bazaar

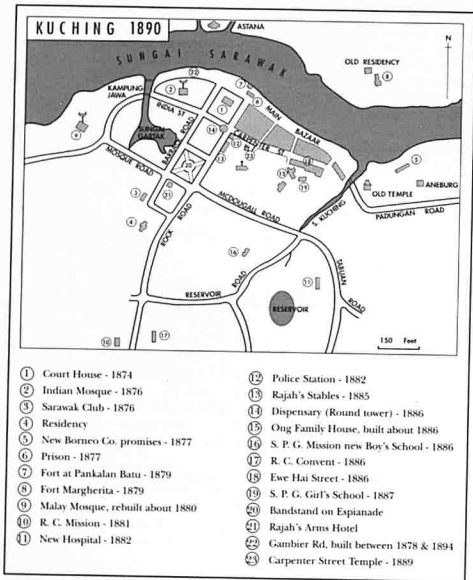
<i>District</i>	<i>Sub-District</i>	<i>Population in 1991</i>
Kuching District	1) Siburan Sub-district	368,386
	2) Padawan Sub-district	
Lundu District	1) Sematan Sub-district	24,599
Bau District		36,526
Total:		429,511

However, based on the Mid-Year Population Estimate 1999, Kuching Division had a population of 532,100.

This Division has one city and 38 towns/bazaars stretching from the tip of

- 13) Buso Bazaar
- 14) Musi Bazaar
- 15) Tondong Bazaar
- 16) Keranji Bazaar
- 17) Tanjung Durian Bazaar

Locality Map of Kuching in 1890



Kuching District

- 18) Batu Kitang Bazaar
- 19) Batu Kawa Bazaar
- 20) Kota Sentosa (7th Mile)
- 21) Kota Padawan (10th Mile)
- 22) Siburan Town (17th Mile)
- 23) Beratok Bazaar
- 24) Tapah Bazaar
- 25) Tang Bukap Bazaar
- 26) Beliong Bazaar
- 27) Muara Tebas Bazaar
- 28) Bako Bazaar
- 29) Buntal Bazaar
- 30) Santubong Bazaar
- 31) City of Kuching
- 32) Sungai Maong Town (3rd Mile)

- 33) Tabuan Jaya Town
- 34) Hui Sing Bazaar, Stampin
- 35) BDC Bazaar, Stampin
- 36) Semongok Bazaar
- 37) Lintang Park Bazaar
- 38) Jalan Astana Bazaar
- 39) Raja Setia Commercial Centre, Stutong

II. KUCHING CITY

Historical Background

Kuching is the capital city of the State of Sarawak in Malaysia. The scenic city is situated along the bank of Sungai Sarawak about 40 kilometres from the river mouth. Kuching is not only the administrative centre but also the



*Kuching in
1839, with
Gunung
Serapi in the
background.*

financial centre and the gateway to Sarawak. The city is situated within Kuching District which has an area of 1,113 square kilometres.

Although the history of Sarawak goes back 40,000 years to the earliest signs of man in the famous Niah Cave in Miri Division, there is very little being written on Kuching or Sarawak before the arrival of James Brooke in 1839. Archaeological and other related work also showed that a small-scale of barter trading prior to the 6th Century A.D. in Borneo grew to a large-scale traffic with both China and Siam by the 12th and 13th Centuries and continuing into the next century.

Both the Srivijaya Empire, centred in Sumatra until the 13th Century and Majapahit - its Javanese successor in the 14th and 15th Centuries - exerted a strong influence on Sarawak. Majapahit fell to the Muslim States in the 15th Century and Sarawak became the southern province of the Brunei Sultanate. At that time, the name "Sarawak" spelt as "Cerava" appeared in some written sources.

Pengiran Tengah Ibnu Sultan Muhammad Hassan, the second son of the third Sultan of Brunei was sent over and became the first Sultan of Sarawak. Sultan Pengiran Tengah founded the first capital of Sarawak at Santubong in 1599.



Kuching in 1840.

When Datu Patinggi Ali was appointed as Datu Patinggi by Sultan of Brunei in the early 19th century, he shifted the administration headquarters from Santubong to Lidah Tanah, a strategic place at the confluence of Sungai Sarawak Kiri and Sungai Sarawak Kanan in Upper Sarawak. Hence, Lidah Tanah became the second capital of Sarawak.

According to the history of Brunei Darussalam, around the year 1820 Sultan Muhammad Kanzul Alam summoned Pengiran Mohd. Salleh who stayed in Sambas to return to Brunei and conferred on him the title of Pengiran Indera Mahkota. Seven years later, he was sent to Sarawak as the Governor of Sarawak representing the Sultan of Brunei. It was Pengiran Indera Mahkota who founded Kuching at Sungai Kuching to be the third capital of Sarawak in 1827. On 15.8.1839, when James Brooke visited Kuching with his ship "Royalist", the present Kuching was only a very tiny settlement. The Rajah Muda's house on the left bank was surrounded

by small Malay villages and a cemetery of graves marked by carved ironwood monuments. On the opposite side of the river there was a row of Chinese shophouses built by the side of a marshy road and more Malay villages extending along the river bank above them. There were about 600-800 people, most of whom were Malay nobles from



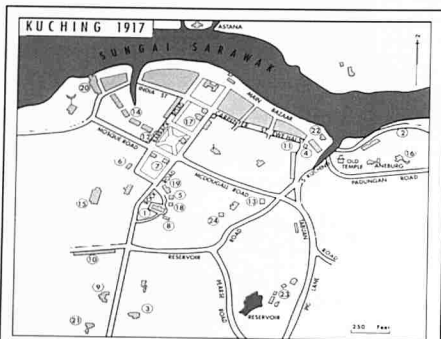
Kuching in 1920.

Brunei and a few Chinese traders. However, a big fire occurred in Kuching on 20.1.1844 and destroyed 160 wooden shophouses.



The Main Bazaar is one of the old streets in Kuching City.

Locality Map of Kuching in 1917



- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ① Museum - 1891 | ⑬ Sarawak Union Club - 1899 |
| ② Thompson Road - 1891 | ⑭ Khoo Hun Yang St. - 1901 - 1902 |
| ③ R.C. Chapel - 1891 | ⑮ Government Lay School - 1902 |
| ④ Wayang Theatre - 1891 | ⑯ Bukit Mata - 1903 |
| ⑤ Curator's House - 1892 | ⑰ Pavilion - 1907 - 1909 |
| ⑥ Sarawak Club rebuilt - 1893 | ⑱ Curator's Office - 1907 |
| ⑦ Rest House - 1893 | ⑲ Second Ladies Club - 1908 |
| ⑧ Orchid House - 1894 | ⑳ Dry Dock - 1908 - 1911 |
| ⑨ New R.C. Mission School - 1894 | ㉑ Kmark new Sarawak Club - 1911 |
| ⑩ New Blacksmith's Houses - 1894 | ㉒ Chinese Court - 1911 - 1912 |
| ⑪ Ewe Hai St. Temple - 1895 | ㉓ Hokkien Free School - 1911 |
| ⑫ First Ladies Club - 1896 | ㉔ S.P.G. Headmaster's House |

"Welcome to Kuching" is landscaped by the City Council, the hornbill structure was completed in 1993.



On 1.8.1988 when Kuching was officially inaugurated as a city, Kuching was also known as Cat City. The statue of a big cat was erected at Padungan area. The question now remains as to whether "Kuching" really means "Cat"?

III. HOW KUCHING DERIVES HER NAME

There are many versions as to how Kuching gets her name.

(1) Version No. 1

An oral tradition has it that when James Brooke travelled up Sungai Sarawak with a local Malay guide in 1841, he saw an animal jumping along the bank of Sungai Sarawak. Out of curiosity, he asked the Malay

guide what it was. The guide replied, "Itu Kuching" (that's cat). Then James Brooke named the place "Kuching".

(2) Version No. 2

In 1839 James Brooke referred to the present Kuching City as "Kuchin" which might suggest the old word "Cochin" or port as in India or Indochina.

(3) Version No. 3

Another version is that Kuching probably derives her name from being a wild cat's haunt within the vicinity of Bukit Mata Kuching a long time ago.

The statue of
a big cat at
the entrance of
Padungan
Araa,
Kuching.



(4) *Version No. 4*

A Chinese story reveals that Kuching which means Old Well (古井) in Chinese Mandarin is actually named after some old wells found in the vicinity of Sungai Kuching. One old well was found within the compound of St. Mary's School and the other one was found at the end of Upper China Street but both wells had been filled up due to the road construction in the areas.

(5) *Version No. 5*

Some people say that Kuching is named after a small river known as Sungai Kuching which used to run in front of Tua Pek Kong Temple at the junction of Jalan Tunku Abdul Rahman (formerly known as Thomson Road) and Jalan Padungan.

(6) *Version No. 6*

Others believe that Kuching is named after the "Mata Kuching" fruit. Sungai Kuching was in the vicinity of Bukit Mata Kuching which was teeming with a type of local fruit called "Buah Mata Kuching" (*Nephelium Malayanse*).

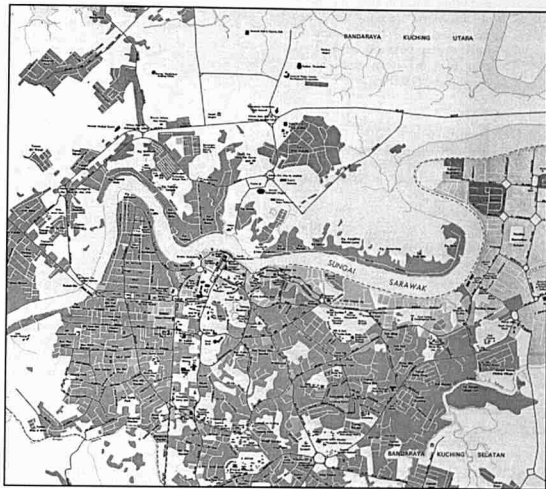
IV. POSSIBLE ARGUMENTS TO THE VERSIONS

(1) *Version No. 1*

Cats have been in existence for at least a few thousand years in the world including the homeland of James Brooke - England. James Brooke should have seen a cat before and, therefore, the cat was not a strange animal to him.

Another point is that local Sarawak Malays do not call a cat "Kuching" but "Pusa". There is a rural town in Sri Aman Division which is known as Pusa. "Pusa" is the term used locally by the Malay to mean cat but not "Kuching".

Kuching City Map in 1988



(2) *Version No. 2*

Before James Brooke became the first White Rajah in 1841, the place was known as "Kuching" but James Brooke changed it to "Sarawak" when Kuching was officially handed over to him by Pengiran Muda Hashim on 24.9.1841.

3) *Version No. 3*

Even if the area surrounding Bukit Mata Kuching was a wild cat's haunt, it would not be known as "Kuching" but possibly "Pusa" or "Pusa Hutan".

(4) *Version No. 4*

"Kuching may mean "Old Well" (古井) in Chinese Mandarin but evidence showed that it was the natives of Sarawak (Malay and Bidayuh) who stayed in the vicinity of Kuching first. The Chinese traders came in very much later. Therefore, there is no historical data to support the belief that Kuching is named after an old well.

(5) *Version No. 5*

To name a town after a Sungai (river) is very common in Sarawak. Sarikei is named after Sungai Sarikei while Kapit gets her name from a river at the downriver of the town. Serian derives her name from a river called Sungai Serian which flows at the side of the town whereas Limbang is so called because of Sungai Limbang.

Sungai Kuching was found running in front of Tua Pek Kong Temple but due to the construction of the road now known as Temple Street and the expansion of the town, the river was filled up sometime in 1928 and, hence, had disappeared from the map of Kuching.

(6) *Version No. 6*

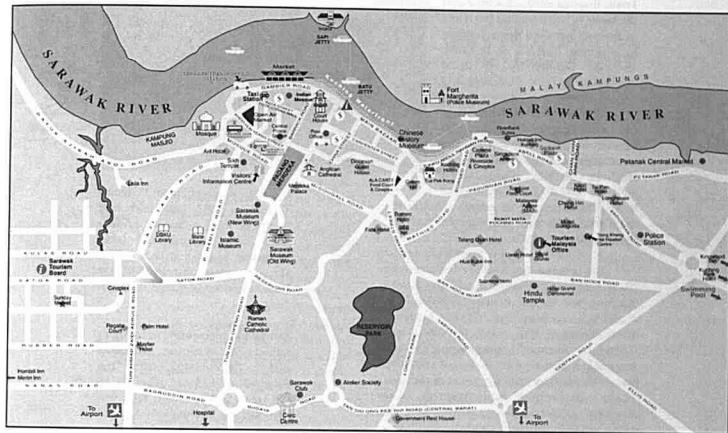
Kuching may derive her name from the local fruit known as "Mata Kuching" (*Nephelium Malarense*) which were found plenty at Bukit Mata Kuching. At least, the name Mata Kuching is still being used for Bukit Mata Kuching and a road within the vicinity is known as Jalan Mata Kuching.

V. ANALYSIS OF THE VERSIONS

In actual fact, Kuching was so called during the Brunei rule and before the arrival of James Brooke. This could be proven in James Brooke's private letter to his mother on 14.9.1841. James Brooke used the word "Kuchin" with a note stating that "Kuchin" was the native name of Sarawak. However, in another letter addressed to his mother dated 26.3.1842, the word "Kuchin" was dropped and only Sarawak was used.

On 12.8.1872, during the Supreme Council meeting, the second White Rajah of Sarawak, Charles Brooke reverted to the name "Sarawak" in place of "Kuching" because he wanted to define the township of Sarawak by a more positive appellation. At that time,

Kuching City Map, 1999



Sarawak was the name of the capital and the river which flows through it as well as the territory of Sarawak. From then onwards, Kuching was the name of the town and the name of Sarawak was used when it meant to represent the whole territory, (Sarawak Gazette No. 47 dated 16.8.1872 refers).

The discovery of 280 pieces of old coins backdated to the 16th Century at the former Rex Theatre demolition site at Temple Street Kuching in 1995 was another concrete proof of the existing of Sungai Kuching and an inland wharf in the area before the river was filled up for road construction.

It is believed that Kuching City was more likely named after Sungai Kuching. Sungai Kuching was in the vicinity of Bukit Mata Kuching which bore a lot of "Mata Kuching" fruits (*Nephelium Malarense*) in the olden days. Therefore, "Kuching" may not mean "cat" and it is unlikely that it has anything to do with cats but rather derived from the name of the river Kuching or the local fruit known as "Mata Kuching", a close relative of Lychee fruit which grows widely in the olden days.

VI. CAPITALS OF SARAWAK

- (1) *First Capital of Sarawak - Santubong*
Santubong became the first capital of Sarawak in 1599 and it was founded by the first and last Sultan of Sarawak, Sultan Pengiran Tengah.



Santubong, the first capital of Sarawak in the late 16th century.

Upon the death of Sultan Pengiran Tengah in 1641, his body was buried at the junction of present Jalan Sultan Tengah and Jalan Kampung Santubong, Damai. The Mausoleum was constructed in May 1995 in honour of Sultan Pengiran Tengah.

Santubong is obviously not a Malay name. In Chinese Hokkien dialect, "Santubong" means "the King of wild boar" whereas in Chinese Hakka dialect, it means "the King of the jungle". A third version of "Santubong" in Iban word means "Coffin".

- (2) *Second Capital of Sarawak - Lidah Tanah*

From 1641 until earlier 19th century, there was no record to show that the Sultan of Brunei had

*Lidah Tanah
- the second
capital of
Sarawak in
the early 19th
century.*



ever sent a replacement for Sultan Pengiran Tengah. In the early 1820s, when Datu Patinggi Ali was appointed as Datu Patinggi in Sarawak, he shifted the administrative headquarters from Santubong to Lidah Tanah, a strategic place at the confluence in Upper Sarawak (Bau). Hence, Datu Patinggi Ali founded the second capital of Sarawak at Lidah Tanah. "Lidah Tanah" in Malay dialect means "the tongue of the land" because the area around Lidah Tanah looks like a tongue.

(3) *Third Capital of Sarawak - Kuching*

As mentioned earlier, the third capital of Sarawak was founded by the representative of Sultan of Brunei, Pengiran Indera Mahkota in 1827, at Sungai Kuching. Sungai Kuching was found

running in front of Tua Pek Kong Temple but the river was filled up in 1928 for the construction of Temple Street in Kuching.

VII. KUCHING AS CAPITAL OF BROOKE ADMINISTRATION

Fourteen years after being founded by the Brunei representative, Kuching was handed over to Sir James Brooke on 24.9.1841 by Pengiran Muda Hashim, the uncle of Sultan of Brunei as an award to Sir James Brooke who pacified Anti-Brunei Movement led by Datu Patinggi Ali. Hence, Sir James Brooke became the first White Rajah of Sarawak in 1841 which also marked the onset of three generations of Brooke family rule over Sarawak.

Kuching which became the seat of the Brooke government underwent remarkable changes. As the administrative capital, it was the focus of attention and development. At first, Sir James Brooke introduced a code of laws and later he built his residence on the right bank of Sarawak River. This residence eventually paved the way for the present Astana, which is the official residence of the Yang Di-Pertua Negeri. Under Sir James Brooke, (1841-1868) laws and orders were enforced. However, Kuching remained cramped and lacked in facilities.

It was not until 1868, when Sir Charles Brooke became the second White Rajah that greater efforts were made to upgrade the town. Drainage was improved, new buildings

*Kuching City
The present
Capital of
Sarawak.*



*Satoh
Commercial
Centre.*



and streets sprang up, and old wooden shophouses replaced by concrete ones. In fact, most of Kuching - from Main Bazaar to Carpenter Street - was rebuilt after being gutted by a great fire on 20.1.1884. By the end of Sir Charles Brooke's rule, (1868-1917) Kuching had grown from a small ramshackle place into a town with attractive government buildings and telecommunication service. Rickshaws and trains became important means of transport. There was even a race course and a club house with a bar, billiard table and bowling alley for sports and entertainment. In 1881, the first rubber tree in Sarawak was planted at Sekama Road, Kuching. On 27.7.1881, the Roman Catholic Mission was introduced to Kuching. In 1885,

St. Thomas's School was built and on 12.12.1894 St. Joseph's School was also opened to provide English education to the local children.

In 1920, a Recreational Club was established and the Sarawak Turf Club was opened in 1924 in Kuching. In 1934, Sir Charles Vyner Brooke built a cinema at the present site of Sarawak Foundation Building or Bangunan Yayasan Sarawak, and named it Sylvia Cinema after his wife. This cinema became the centre of relaxation for the

Kuching populace. On 15.6.1923, the Power Station which was erected at the site of the present Electra House provided electricity and street lighting in Kuching Town. In 1935, the Sarawak Library was opened and in 1939, a Malay Teachers' Training College was established at Maderasah Kuching.

In October 1924, the Chartered Bank of England opened a branch in Kuching, providing services in currency exchange in order to meet the increasing commercial and banking demands of Sarawak. In 1926 Satok



*The esplanade
"The people's
place."*

*Padang
Merdeka
1998.*



Suspension Bridge was completed carrying the pipes with water supply from Matang to Kuching town. In 1925 Sarawak had eight wireless stations in service and by 1926 this number had increased to fifteen.

Hospital and medical services were improved. In July 1925 Sarawak had its own government dentist. In October 1925 Rajah Charles Brooke Memorial Hospital for the lepers at the 13th Mile, Penrissen Road, provided medical care to the lepers who had been moved from the Leper Settlement on Satang Island. In 1926, the new Government General Hospital at Rock Road was completed.

On 24.9.1930 the road joining Kuching and Serian was completed. In October 1931, new Kuching Police Station was completed. In December 1932 the British Empire

Broadcasting Station began its regular transmission to Sarawak and radios became very popular in Kuching. On 26.9.1938, the construction of old Kuching Airport costing 25,000 pounds was completed and opened to air traffic.

Kuching continued to prosper under the third White Rajah Sir Charles Vyner Brooke (1917-1946) who succeeded his father. In 1941, Kuching became the venue for the Brooke government's centenary celebrations, which included official ceremonies and an

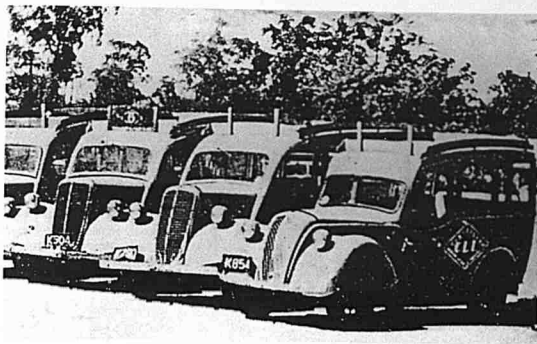
agricultural show at the Sarawak Museum ground. A few months later, the Brooke administration came to a close when the Japanese occupied Sarawak (1941-1945).

After World War Two, Kuching was revitalized as the capital of Sarawak under the British Government (1946-1963). When Sarawak joined the Malaysian Federation in 1963 Kuching remained as the state capital. The rapid pace of development it enjoyed after the war had gained increasing momentum until this day.

VIII. TRANSPORTATION IN OLDEN DAYS

Kuching during the time of the first White Rajah was a small settlement nothing more than a row of wooden houses which stretched along Main Bazaar and the

*"Mosquito
Bus"
The first bus
service in
Kuching
launched in
1912.*



opposite bank of the river. The thoroughfare along Main Bazaar was little more than a dusty road, ideal for the bullock carts which made their appearance in the mid 1880's. These bullock carts were used to transport goods. Heavy loads were also carried on two big baskets supported by a pole slung across the shoulders.

In 1895, the first rickshaw arrived from Singapore and for many years to come, remained a popular form of public transport. Rickshaw stands were conveniently found at

various locations in town. The bicycle provided another popular means of getting about in town since it was introduced in the 1900's. It was not until 1907 that the first motorcar - a 10-12 HP Coventry Humber - was brought to Kuching by the Manager of the Borneo Company, Mr. J.M. Bryan. By 1926, there were already several cars, buses and lorries plying the streets of Kuching. The first public bus service launched in 1912 made use of a 2-tonne lorry and the "Mosquito Bus" which plied along Rock Road (Jalan Tun Openg) at a speed of about 14 miles per hour.

In 1883, the building of the Kuching/Penrissen Road began and in 1930, the construction of the Simanggang (Sri Aman) Road had started. In 1912, Rajah Charles Brooke started to build a railway which connected the Kuching town area to the tenth mile (Kota Padawan) presently Jalan Kereta Api route. It was opened to the public on 9.4.1916. The railway made easier for the movement of farm produce and people to and fro the outskirts of the town. However, the service was discontinued in 1933 for unknown reason.

Kuching's aviation history recorded the first landing of a seaplane on 16.10.1924. The plane flew over the town and eventually landed on the Sarawak River in front of the Main Bazaar. On 24.8.1983, RM35 million new terminal building of Kuching International Airport was opened for public use.

IX. KUCHING CITY STATUS IN 1988

The day 1.8.1988 was a historical day for Kuching: it was the day when Kuching became a city. It has an area of 69 square kilometres with a multi-racial population of 300,000.

Kuching has a unique and effective administration because the city is divided into two parts. Kuching City North is administered by a Commissioner known as Datuk Bandar and Kuching City South by a Mayor. It is the only city in Malaysia and perhaps in the world with two mayors. For record purpose, Datu Dr. Yusoff bin Haji Hanifah was appointed as the first Datuk

Bandar of Kuching City North while Y.B. Dato Song Swee Guan as the first Mayor of Kuching City South.

X. KUCHING CAT MUSEUM

Kuching as a "Cat City" had drawn the attention from our neighbouring Lion City of Singapore. On 31.7.1991, Encik Othman Wok of Singapore Tourist Promotion Board, Singapore donated 3 sculptured porcelain Singapore cats as an additional collection to Cat Gallery in Sarawak Museum. The Singapore cats with wide-eyed, short-furred in different postures were unveiled at a simple handing-over ceremony in the Sarawak Museum by the then Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Social Development,



*Civic Centre,
Kuching.*

Datuk Haji Taha Ariffin. During the acceptance speech of the Singapore cats, Datuk Haji Taha Ariffin wished that the cat museum could enter the Guinness Book of Records as the first museum of its kind in the world.

The museum-quality, hand-painted Singapore cats are an important contribution to Sarawak's Cat Gallery which houses what is possibly the biggest collection of cat figurines, illustrations, literature and even a mummified Egyptian cat. The Cat Gallery which was an extension of the Sarawak Museum and it temporarily housed in Tun Abdul Razak Building. It had a total of 1,632 items of cats related exhibits collected throughout the world and the whole collection was acquired at a cost of RM350,000.00.

A Cat Museum is established on the ground floor of Kuching North City Hall Building at Bukit Siol, Petra Jaya, Kuching since 1993. It has a reference library and an audio-visual room where movies and video tapes on the cat family are shown. It has four galleries which hold various collections of cat artifacts. There are also live cat shows held twice yearly for cat lovers and tourists.

XI. LARGER KUCHING CITY

In November 1991, when the Dewan



*Khoo Hun
Yang Street,
Kuching.*

Undangan Negeri Sarawak unanimously passed the Kuching City and Kuching Rural District Council (Alteration of Boundaries) Bill, the area of Kuching City has increased tremendously. The area under Kuching City North has increased from 53 square kilometres to 431.01 square kilometres and the area under Kuching City South from 16 square kilometres to 77.53 square kilometres.

Kuching City has grown bigger literally since attaining the city status in 1988. The wisdom of the YAB Chief Minister of Sarawak, Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr.) Haji Abdul Taib bin Mahmud in dividing the City under two administrations becomes apparent and in line with his policy on "Politics of Development". With an addition of 439.54 square kilometres, Kuching City has an area of 508.54 square kilometres. By

having two administrations, it is possible to extend the municipal service of the city administrations to the formerly sub-urbans such as Santubong, Bako, Tabuan, Stampin and Airport areas. With the simultaneous updating of facilities of these areas, the City as a whole will be more complete with more public amenities so that more people will get the benefit. The Kuching City North Commission Building costing RM60 million was declared open on 30.8.1993 whereas the Kuching South City Council costing RM55 million was declared open on 15.3.1996.

XII. PRESENT DAY KUCHING

Kuching is at once a visual history book and a modern metropolis. Relics like Fort Margherita, Sarawak Museum, Square Tower and Astana are concrete testaments of its colourful history. Standing cheek by jowl with these relics are imposing structures which boast of modern architecture. This mixture of the old and new has increasingly endeared the city to tourists. In 1991 census, Kuching District had a population of 368,386. However, based on the Mid-Year Population Estimate 1999, the population of Kuching



The Building of Dewan Bandar Kuching Selatan (Kuching City South).



The Building of Dewan Bandar Kuching Utara (Kuching City North).

District had increased to 460,200. Kuching District has two sub-districts known as Siburan Sub-district and Padawan Sub-District which has a population of 35,094 and 11,667 respectively based on 1991 Census. Siburan Town which is 28 kilometres from

*Federal
Complex,
Jalan Simpang
Tiga,
Kuching.*



Kuching consists of 165 shophouses (66 units in Siburán Old Township, 57 units in Siburán New Township and 42 units in Taman Duranda). The headquarters of Padawan Sub-District is Tang Bukap Bazaar which is 54 kilometres from Kuching and it has 5 units of double-storey wooden shophouses.

Tourism has recently gained increasing recognition as contributing

towards the economic development of the state. Kuching is enjoying a share of the tourist dollar, encouraged by the presence of an international airport. Malaysia Airlines (MAS) operates a total of about 40 direct and indirect services weekly between Kuching and Kuala Lumpur. There are also direct flights to Singapore, the Philippines, Hong Kong, China, Japan, Korea, Indonesia and Brunei. Besides, its importance as a gateway to the rest of the state, Kuching is also the gateway to nearby tourist attractions such as the Bako National Park, Damai Beach Resort, Cultural Village and Santubong historical sites. The Culture Village is a micro image of Sarawak. It features some of the ethnic groups living in their native surroundings and buildings, as well as demonstrates their life style and handicrafts. It is especially designed for those who are unable to travel into the interior to see for themselves the various ethnic cultures. The

*20-storey
Changlin
Condominium
building at
Jalan Green,
Kuching.*





*Merdeka
Hotel is built
in the old
Aurora
Hotel's site.*

village offers a glimpse of the complexity of Sarawak culture.

In Kuching itself, visitors can enjoy a leisurely walk to the historical buildings; visit the Sarawak Museum which is a storehouse of local history and culture; lap in the luxury of modern hotels; savour local fares at the numerous stalls and restaurants or buy arts and craft items from various parts of the state.

The city is a microcosm of Sarawak in terms of its population make-up and culture.

It is a dazzling blend of people (currently numbering more than 400,000) and culture. With vast improvement in transport, the people have become more mobile. Many have migrated from various parts of the state to the capital city in search of better prospects. The result is a colourful congregation of people - Malay, Melanau, Iban, Bidayuh, Orang Ulu, Chinese, Indian and others - who brought with them their unique lifestyles and culture to the city. The city provides a ready market for some of these locally grown and manufactured products. Others are exported through Tanah Puteh Port and Sim Kheng Hong Port. The



*Wisma Bapa
Malaysia,
Dewan
Undangan
Negeri
(Legislature)
at the right
and Lapau
(Ceremonial
Hall) in the
foreground,
Petra Jaya,
Kuching.*

city's commercial and industrial activities are further supported by a system of financial institutions. Currently, it has about 40 commercial banks and finance houses, of which 6 have international affiliations.

As the capital of Sarawak, Kuching is the seat of the State Government. Most of the administrative institutions are found here. The State Secretariat, Wisma Bapa Malaysia houses the State Ministers and some government agencies. Beside the State Secretariat stand the Dewan Undangan Negeri, which is the venue for parliamentary sessions for the elected State Assembly, Wisma Sumber Alam, SESCO Headquarters, Menara Pelita Building, RM53 million State Library Park, Kuching High Court Building and Normah Specialist Medical Centre.

In 1983 the first stage of Stadium Negeri, situated at Petra Jaya, was constructed at a cost of RM4.6 million. In 1989, it was reconstructed at a cost of RM11.2 million. In 1991, the third stage which added an extra block to the existing stadium at a cost of RM6.8 million. The total cost for the construction of Stadium Negeri was RM22.6 million. In 1988, the State Civic Centre and the Indoor Stadium (Stadium Perpaduan) costing RM22 million were constructed and opened to members of the public in conjunction with Kuching City Day and State Silver Jubilee celebration.

In 1997, in conjunction with the holding of World Youth Football Cup competition, a world standard outdoor stadium known as Sarawak Stadium costing more than RM120

*Bangunan
Gateway
Kuching - the
highest
building in
Kuching
City.*



million was built in Petra Jaya, Kuching and it was declared open on 17.6.1997. These landmarks obviously give complements to Kuching's skyline and enhance its image as a modern city. In order to reduce the heavy traffic flow, Satok Flyover costing RM27.4 million was completed and declared open on 17.4.1995 and later, Simpang Tiga Flyover also opens to the public. The vital link in Kuching City's expansion chain was the completion of Sungai Sarawak Regulations Scheme (SSRS) costing RM150 million. The SSRS includes the barrage, Bako causeway and a four-lane road linking Pending and Sijingkat as well as the installation of a Telemetry System. The systems form another

important link to the industrial estate and for the expansion of residential and business centres in Kuching City. It was declared open by the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dato Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohammad on 27.8.1998. In order to solve parking problem in the City, the RM7.4 million Saujana Carpark and the RM19.5 million Taman Kereta in Kuching were constructed and opened to the public on 15.3.1991 and on 23.10.1994 respectively. The highest building in Kuching City, known as Gateway Kuching, is situated along Jalan Mata Kuching. The RM55 million building which consists of 44 units of apartment and 24 floors of office spaces is still under construction. It is expected to be completed in late 2000.

However, unlike some cities which have become mere concrete jungles, Kuching still has plenty of wide open spaces and greens. The authority has made increasing efforts to turn it into a garden city. Trees, shrubs and flowers line all the major roads and decorate the roundabouts. Cleanliness campaigns are constantly carried out to keep eateries and other public premises clean and tidy. On 11.7.1999, the Chief Minister of Sarawak, YAB Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr.) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud declared open the RM4 million Stutong Forest Park which he renamed as Sama Jaya Forest Park in Kuching. The main purpose is to conserve the forest resources with an area of 43 acres within Kuching City for the urban people to enjoy the rich greenery at their convenience. The Timber Museum, the Forest Biology Museum and the Bamboo Museum are all located within the park. Other facilities available at the park include Friendship tracks, a reflexology path, natural trails, cycle and jogging tracks, an Ethno - Botanical Garden etc.

Kuching's warm climate is perfect for indulging in all sorts of sports. There are clubs offering their members a wide range of recreational facilities. One of the oldest of these is the Sarawak Club, which has a swimming pool, tennis and squash courts, and indoor game facilities. The Sarawak Golf Club at Petra Jaya has a restaurant, an 18-hole golf course, snookerium, tennis courts and soon to be completed - an Olympic size swimming pool, and tennis and badminton courts.

Kuching can certainly be considered as one of the most pleasant cities in this part of the world to visit or to reside in. It offers adequate facilities for both business and entertainment without the congestion and rat race lifestyle of some cities. Around Kuching City, there are a lot of attractions which reflect the culture, history and natural environments of the state. Evidence of Brooke and Colonial times can still be seen in Sarawak both in the old buildings such as the Court House, Astana, Forts and Museum.

(1) *Kuching Waterfront*

To glimpse Sarawak's rich culture, Kuching Waterfront is the centre. Costing RM89 millions, it has transformed the riverbank into a modern functional and attractive centre comparable to that of the Rocks in Sydney, Australia.

Kuching Waterfront, a major restoration and land reclamation project, has become the most popular meeting place in the city. Drab warehouses have been replaced with an almost 900 metres long esplanade,

beautifully landscaped and dotted with wooden benches, food stalls, restaurants and entertainment facilities. A number of older buildings have been preserved and incorporated into the design, including the Chinese History Museum, the Sarawak Steamship Building, an open-air theatre and the Square Tower. Modern additions to the Waterfront include a restored Chinese pavilion, an observation tower, a tea terrace and the spectacular musical fountains, as well as a number of modern sculptures. During the daytime, the Waterfront offers excellent views of the Astana, Fort Margherita and the Malay Kampung which line along the north bank of the river, but at night the waterfront really comes alive.

Native cultural performances are being performed throughout the Waterfront; found in building's architecture, craft stores, local cuisine in restaurants and hawker carts, slated murals and sculptures, even on the bows of small Malay Sampan boats which ferry people across the historic Sarawak River. Indeed, the Waterfront has truly become the "People's Park" for not only the locals but also the tourists as well.

(2) *Main Bazaar*

Main Bazaar, opposite the Waterfront, is the oldest street in the city and the heart of old Kuching dated back to 1864. It has some superb examples of Chinese shophouse architecture, many of which have been occupied by the same family

*Old State
Mosque,
Kuching.*



for generations. These families still pursue traditional occupations such as tinsmithing, carpentry and petty trading. Kuching's highest concentration of antique and handicraft shops are to be found there, and shoppers can rest between bargaining sessions in a number of old-fashioned coffee shops with panelled walls and marble-topped tables.

(3) Tua Pekong Temple, Kuching

The ornately decorated Tua Pekong Temple is located on Jalan Tunku Abdul Rahman, opposite the Waterfront, and it is the oldest Chinese temple in Kuching. It is believed to have been built in 1843, although official records show its existence in 1876.

(4) Kuching Mosque

Kuching Mosque, previously the State Mosque was built in 1968, at the cost of RM1 million and its gilded cupolas make it one of the city's most striking landmarks, particularly at sunset. The site originally housed an old wooden mosque built in 1852. The new State Mosque is situated across Sungai Sarawak at Petra Jaya. It is a striking design, featuring a single cupola and Italian marble interior detailing.

(5) Civic Centre (Dewan Suarrah Kuching)

The viewing platform which is 74 metres high at the top of the futuristic Civic Centre tower offers the best all-round views of Kuching and the surrounding area. The city and its



*Astana - the
official
residence of
TYT Yang
Di-Pertua
Negeri
Sarawak.*

hinterland, Mount Serapi, Mount Santubong and even the mountains of Kalimantan are visible on a clear day. There is a restaurant, canteen and pub-cum-karaoke one floor down. The Civic Centre complex also houses a Planetarium, a Public Library and a big meeting hall which can accommodate about 1,000 people. The Centre was declared open on 4.9.1988.

(6) Astana

The Astana, the imposing palace on the north bank of Sarawak River was built in 1870 by Sir Charles Brooke, the Second White Rajah of Sarawak as a bridal gift to his wife Raneë Margaret. It is actually three separate buildings

fused into one, with each connected by the other by short and narrow passage ways. It has undergone substantial alterations and renovations. Today it is the official residence of the Yang Dipertua Negeri, the Governor of Sarawak.

(7) Fort Margherita

The Fort was built in 1879 to guard Kuching's river approaches from pirates. Named after Charles Brooke's wife, Raneë Margaret, it is an extremely attractive and interesting building. The Fort houses a Police Museum, with fascinating exhibits of Brooke militia, weapons captured during the communist insurgency and the famous "laughing skulls."

Fort
Margherita,
Kuching.



(8) *Square Tower*

Built in 1879 as a detention camp, the tower was converted into a fortress. It never fired a shot in anger, unlike its wooden predecessor which was burnt down by the Chinese Anti-Rajah Movement from Bau in the 1857. Nowadays it houses a multimedia information centre and video theatre, providing information and documentaries on Sarawak's tourist attractions.

(9) *Court House*

The **Court House** complex was built in 1874 as the seat of Sarawak's government and was used until 1973. It is a superb collection of buildings, with magnificent *Belian* (ironwood) roofs and beautiful detailing inside as well as outside, reflecting local art forms. The colonial-baroque **Clock**

Tower was added in 1883 and the **Charles Brooke Memorial** in 1924. The complex also includes The Pavilion Building - a piece of old New Orleans transplanted to Kuching, built in 1909 and used for many years as the General Hospital until 1947. The **Round Tower**, originally planned as a fort (1886) but never fully completed. It was used as a dispensary for a while and later it was used by the Labour

Department until 1980. The whole area is currently undergoing redevelopment. The original buildings will be restored and used for art galleries, cultural exhibits, etc.

(10) *Historical Museum*

a) *Sarawak Museum*

The idea of creating a museum to hold Sarawak's relics was first mooted by Sir Charles Brooke, the second White Rajah of Sarawak. Later, the man who influenced him to build a permanent museum was Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace, a naturalist who was in Sarawak for two years conducting a research on the evolution of man based on the Orang Uan of Borneo. Straddling both sides of Jalan Tun Abang Haji Openg, the Museum is one of the best museums in Southeast

RM170 million
Wisma
Seberkas along
Jalan Tun
Abang Haji
Openg,
Kuching.



Asia. The old wing, opened in 1888, is designed in the style of a Normandy town-house. The building was later renovated to its present form in 1911. It houses an exceptional ethnographic collection, some good natural history displays and a section on the oil industry in Sarawak. The exhibition of traditional wood-carvings is magnificent. The new wing has more ethnographic exhibits, splendid Chinese ceramics and furniture, an art gallery, a section on Sarawak's history, and some excellent archaeological exhibits, including a reconstruction of the early human settlements at Niah



*Clock Tower
and Brooke's
Memorial
Monument,
Kuching.*

Caves. In the Museum grounds there is an **Aquarium**, the **Botanical Gardens** and the **Heroes' Memorial**, built to commemorate the deads of World War Two, the Communist Insurgenc and Confrontation with Indonesia as well as the Heroes of Sarawak.

b) Sarawak Islamic Museum

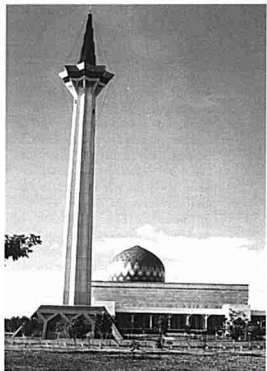
The Islamic Museum, near the Sarawak Museum is the first of its kind in South-East Asia. It has 7 galleries exclusively devoted to the exhibits of architecture, coinage, weaponry, textile, pottery, porcelains and other artefacts of Islamic origin.

It was declared open by the Chief Minister of Sarawak YAB Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud on 22.5.1992. The huge collection of artefacts from ASEAN countries and other Islamic nations provides a source of rich information to those who wish to trace the development of Islam in the Malay Archipelago and its connection with the development of Islam in other countries, such as India, China, Persia and the Arab state.



Sarawak Museum.

It is located at Jalan P. Ramlee in the beautifully restored Maderasah Melayu Building (1930). It is also accessible from the Sarawak Museum's new wing. The Islamic Museum presents a clear picture of the rich historical heritage and special culture of the Muslim community in Sarawak and throughout the Malay-Indonesian archipelago, and traces connections with the development of Islam in the rest of the World.



New state mosque, Petra Jaya.

c) Chinese History Museum

Originally built as a court house for the Chinese community in Kuching in 1912, the building was taken over by the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in 1930. Since 1993, it

has turned into the Chinese History Museum. This Museum is housed at the old building belonging to Kuching Chinese Chamber of Commerce Association on the Waterfront opposite the Tuapekong temple. It traces the history of the Chinese community in Sarawak. Exhibits include the early trade routes, initial migration from various regions of China, geographical distribution, the early pioneers, traditional trading activities, the formation of trade and community associations, political history and the involvement of the Chinese community in modern, multi-racial Sarawak. It was declared open on 23.10.1993 by the then Assistant Minister for Culture Youth and Sport Y.B. Encik Alfred Yap Chin Loi.

d) Cat Museum

The World's first Cat Museum, devoted to all things feline, is in Petra Jaya in the office complex of Kuching City North Council and it was declared open on 6.11.1993. Cat lovers will find a range of exhibits, photos, feline art and cat souvenirs. It has a total of 1,632 items of cats related exhibits collected throughout the world and they are being displayed in four galleries. The whole collection was acquired at a cost of RM350,000.00.

e) Timber Museum

It is situated in the Sarawak Timber

Industry Development Council Building (Wisma Sumber Alam) in Petra Jaya, Kuching. Those who have the interest in forestry, wood items, forest products and the development of timber industry should visit the museum.

f) Police Museum

It is housed in Fort Margherita built in 1879. There are many old cannons, cannon balls, guns, pistols, swords and other restiges of its artillery are being displayed there. The armoury still exists as does the condemned prisoner's cell. Besides, it has a display of old police weapons, reconstructed opium dens, scenes of hanging and other forms of criminal punishment. The Police Museum was established on 31.8.1971.

g) Living Museum

The Santubong Peninsula is located at the West Mouth of the Sarawak River. At its northern tip, Mount Santubong (810 metres high) rises majestically from the sea. The area has been settled since ancient times, and was once a major trading centre. Nowadays the Peninsula, particularly Damai, is a popular beach resort area and a good base for discovering the charms of Southwest Sarawak. All manner of attractions are here; sleepy fishing villages, primary rainforests, superb seafood restaurants, an Arnold Palmer-



The Culture Village, Damai.



Timber Museum.



Chinese History Museum.

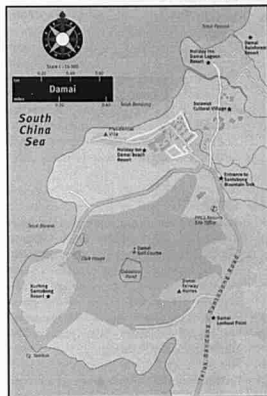
designed golf course, a "living museum" and luxury beach resorts.

Sarawak Cultural Village: "See Sarawak in Half a Day" is the claim made by Sarawak Cultural Village, a unique award-winning living museum offering an excellent introduction to local cultures and lifestyles. Popularly known as the Living Museum, the **Sarawak Cultural Village** is a showcase for Sarawak's rich cultural diversity. Visitors to the Village can sample Sarawak all in one single place. The Cultural Village, built on a seven hectares site at the foothill of the legendary Mount Santubong, is 35 kilometres from Kuching City and is a stone's throw from Damai Holiday Inn, a beach resort.

The Cultural Village is quaintly landscaped with a manmade lake at the centre surrounded by 7 authentic replicas of ethnic houses: the Bidayuh cultural house and longhouse, the Iban longhouse, the Penan hut, the Orang Ulu longhouse, the Melanau Rumah Tinggi, the Malay house and the Chinese farmhouse. Displayed in each house are many artefacts made by the individual dwellers. Demonstration of arts and crafts like beadworks, wood

and bamboo carvings, pua weaving and straw weaving can be seen while touring the Village.

The rich cultural heritage in the form of dances and music presented by various ethnic groups is one of the highlights of the visit. The grand cultural show which lasts about one hour is performed in the Village theatre.



*Damai
Location
Map.*

(11) Sunday Market

Kuching City's Sunday Market or "Pasar Minggu" is, as its name implies, held every Sunday although the market activities start as early as Saturday afternoon. This is perhaps the best place to meet the local people since this is where the indigenous groups bring out jungle fruits and vegetables to sell to the city folks.

The Sunday Market, which actually starts at 1.00 p.m. on Saturday afternoon, is held at Jalan Satok. It is renowned for the Ibans and the Bidayus who set up temporary stalls here selling fruits and vegetables, but there are also many good Chinese and Malay stalls. Goods on offer include handicrafts, forest produce (including delicious wild honey), meat, pets of all descriptions, orchid plants, live fish, and a whole range of local snacks and delicacies. The market is a must for weekend visitors, as it is very colourful and teeming with shoppers.

(12) National Parks

There are a number of national parks near to Kuching City. The famous Bako National Park gazetted in 1957 is situated at the northern tip of Muara Tebas Peninsula covering an area of 2,728 hectares. It is the home of the rare proboscis monkeys, wild boars, squirrels and monitor lizards. The park is 37 kilometres from Kuching.

Kubah National Park covering an area of 2,230 hectares is accessible from Kuching

within one hour drive along Matang Road. It is the home of bearded pig, mouse deer, black hornbill and reptiles. Besides, it has one of the widest selections of palm and orchids in Borneo. Gazetted as a National Park in 1989, Kubah National Park is 20 kilometres west of Kuching.

(13) Borneo Highlands Resort

The Resort which covers 5,000 acres on the 1,000-metre Penrissen Highland Plateau about 70 kilometres from Kuching will be fully completed after 2005. The total cost of the project, estimated at RM500 million, is a joint-venture project between Country Heights Holding Bhd and the Sarawak Land Custody and Development Authority (LCDA). The first phase costing about RM100 million which consists of an 18-hole golf course, a golf hotel, visitor chalets, tropical gardens, residential bungalows and other supporting infrastructures was completed at the end of 1999. The RM53 million 20.5 kilometre Borneo Heights Road was declared open for public use on 26.11.1999.

XIII) LUNDU DISTRICT

1) Lundu in General

Lundu is a district of Kuching Division and it is situated at the western part of Sarawak. The district has an area of 1,812 square kilometres. It has one sub-district

called Sematan which is 24 kilometres from Lundu. Sematan Bazaar has 16 wooden and 14 concrete shophouses. According to a Selakau story "Lundu" was actually the name of a small group of people known as "Undu" who stayed around Lundu area long long ago. Due to small in number and intermarried with the Selakau, the race was no more in existence but the name "Undu" and later it was pronounced as "Lundu" remains until today. "Lundu" is also the name of a local riverine fish found in the area and its scientific name is *Macrones Guilo*. The symbols of Lundu Town are Orchid Normah and Rafflesia Flower.

Based on 1991 census the district had a population of 24,599, the majority of them are the Selakau, Bidayuh followed by the Malay, the Chinese and the Iban. However, according to the Mid-Year Population Estimate 1999, Lundu District had a population of 29,100.

2) Lundu Town

Lundu Town was first established sometime in 1860s along Batang Kayan. Some Chinese Hakka immigrants from Pontianak, Kalimantan Indonesia and Chinese Teochew came direct from



*District
Office cum
Community
Hall
Lundu.*



*Lundu
Town
Square.*

China to settle down in Lundu. The Chinese Temple in the town was built in 1890. In 1930, Chinese Primary School was established in Lundu. In those days, like other bazaars in Sarawak, the shophouses were made of wood and Atap roof. On 3.12.1949, the whole bazaar was gutted by fire. Today, there are 49 double-storey wooden shophouses, 6 double-storey concrete shophouses and 16 three-storey concrete shophouses totalling to 71 shophouses in Lundu Town. There is one private clinic and one commercial bank in the town. Besides, Gading Hawkers' Centre, Wet and Dry Market are built by

*Artifact of
Orchid
Normah.*



Lundu District Council in the town. The old District Office built in 1952 is given to FELCRA as its office in Lundu and the new District Office cum Community Hall was officially declared open on 21.8.1996. Lundu is accessible by sea and by land. On 6.10.1968, the construction of 82-kilometre Bau/Lundu Road was completed and opened to traffic.

3) Lundu Development

From 1958 to 1965, about 1.52 million tonnes of washed bauxite were produced at Sematan. Lundu is the only district which has a silk worm farm producing silk products for local and oversea markets. Besides, the district is also producing palm oil, sea



*Artifact of
Rafflesia
Flower.*

food, timber and other agricultural produce. A youth camp known as Kem Belia Pueh is the first youth camp in Sarawak built at Pueh, Lundu in 1991. Since then, thousands of youth from various agencies have been trained in the camp. A district sport complex costing RM6 million was also constructed in Lundu. At the moment, we have to cross Batang Kayan by a ferry before we reach Lundu Town. By 2001, upon completion of RM17.3 million 415-metre long Batang Kayan Bridge, Lundu will be more accessible by road from Kuching.

Up to June 1999, twelve estate areas totalling to more than 13,000 hectares were planted with oil palms by FELCRA, SALCRA, LCDA, FELDA and 3 other companies at

Sempadi, Bokah, Sebako, Kandaie, and Tamang areas in Lundu District. In 1997, the total production of oil palm was more than 145,000 metric tonnes. These oil palm estates have created numerous employments for the local people there.

Lundu has two national parks namely Tanjung Datu National Park covering an area of 1,379 hectares and Gunung Gading National Park covering an area of 4,106 hectares which are gazetted in 1994 and 1983 respectively. Tanjung Datu National Park is the park where the mountains meet the sea with crystal clear rivers and wildlife abound. Gunung Gading National Park is the place where the largest flower in the world, the spectacular *Rafflesia Tuanmudae* or Bunga Pakma could be found. Satang Island and Talang-Talang Islands are the small islands off the coast of Lundu where turtles from all over the world come and lay eggs. Samunsan Wildlife Sanctuary is also situated within Lundu District.

Lundu and its sub-district Sematan are the local favourite tourist centres where hundreds of local tourists come and spend their weekends with the families to

enjoy the natural and clean beaches, the best of which are Pandan and Siar in Lundu and Pueh in Sematan.

(XIV) BAU DISTRICT

1) Bau in General

The district which is about 35 kilometres from Kuching has an area of 884.40 square kilometres and based on 1991 census it had a population of 36,526 people. The majority of them are the Bidayuh



The RM145,000/- Landmark of Bau - The natural heritage and legacy of gold mining unique to Bau are strikingly depicted in this recently erected monument.

followed by the Chinese and the Malays. However, according to the Mid-Year Population Estimate 1999, Bau district had a population of 42,800. The symbol of Bau is the rock structure which consists of 3 human figure sculptures depicting the history of goldmining in the district together with artifacts of Orchid Normal and the carnivorous pitcher plants.

2) The Origin of the name of Bau

Bau which is another district of Kuching Division was established in 1820 and, hence, it is seven years older than Kuching City which was founded in 1827. The old name of Bau district was "Upper Sarawak" whereas the old name of Bau Town was "Mau San" or "Bukit Mau". In Chinese Hakka, "Mau San" means



*The author
(on the left)
and Mr. Tan
Hock Hee,
the Public
Liaison
Manager,
Bukit Young
Gold Mine at
the bottom of
Tasik Biru
Bau on
23.8.1994.*

"Hat's Mountain" because Gunung Krian looks like a hat. European authors during the Brooke Regime pronounced "Bau" as "Bow". "Bau" in Bahasa Malaysia means "smelly". Actually the word "Bau" is not "smelly" because it derived from the word "Mau" (which means hat in Chinese Hakka) but it was wrongly pronounced as "Bau" by the Brooke Regime in the olden days until today.



Does Gunung Krian Bau look like a Chinese Official hat called "Mau"?

3) Bau in History

From the early years until recently, Bau was famous for its rich mineral resources. Based on the Annual Reports of Geological Survey Department for the year 1980 to 1996, Bau had produced 21,598 flasks (76 lbs per flask) of mercury from the early 19th century up to 1898 and 90,000 tonnes of high grade antimony from early 19th century until the closure of Paku Kong Mine in 1985. The total production of gold in Bau since the



Bau Town in 1998.

early 19th century until the closure of gold mines in 1996 was 44.7 tonnes of which nearly 18.4 tonnes of gold came from the famous Tai Parit Lake (Tasik Biru) deposit. Hence, the nick name of Bau is Gold Town.

Bau has produced two heroes in the past, namely:-

- a) Liu Shanbang, the Chinese Hero who refused to be ruled by the White Rajah. He was the leader of Twelve Kongs operating mining activity in Bau. He became the *de facto* Rajah of Sarawak for 5 days from 19.2.1857 to 23.2.1857. He was killed by the Brooke's force at Jugan, Sinawan on 24.2.1857.
- b) Datu Patinggi Ali, the Malay Hero who refused to be ruled by the Brunei Authority. He was the founder of the second Capital of Sarawak at Lidah Tanah, Bau in the early 19th century. When the Governor from Brunei, Pengiran Indera Mahkota forced the Malay and the Land Dayak (Bidayuh) to extract antimony like slaves in Bau, he led an Anti-Brunei force against the Brunei Authority in 1835. However, he submitted to James Brooke in 1840 on the condition that the Brunei Chief returned to Brunei.

Both Liu Shanbang and Datu Patinggi Ali were declared as the heroes of Sarawak by the State Government of Sarawak on 27.7.1993. Their relief figures were portrayed on the plaques around the base of the Heroes' Monument at Museum Garden, Kuching.

4) Bau Town

Bau Town suffered four big fire in the past. The first big fire occurred at Bau Lama (Mau San) on 25.12.1857 when all the buildings of the settlement were burned down by the Rajah Brooke's force against the Chinese Anti-Rajah Movement who stayed there. The second big fire occurred at Bau Town on 3.12.1909 in which all the shophouses along Jalan Ong Guan Cheng were completely burned to the ground. The loss was estimated at \$50,000/-. The third big fire happened on 9.1.1942. It was during the Japanese Occupation, looters from the gold mines and rubber tappers from Dahan Estate set fire to Bau Town for the purpose of looting. The fourth big fire took place on 24.9.1978 at 3.30 a.m. All the 69 shophouses along Jalan Datuk Salau turned into ashes by 5.00 a.m. that morning. About 900 people were made homeless. The present Bau Town was rebuilt in October, 1982.

Bau district has a few famous caves namely Fairy Cave, Wind Cave and Ghost Cave. At the side of Fairy Cave, a section has been turned into Batman Wall at the cost of RM 700,000/- for rock climbing activity. Especially during weekends, people from the district itself and the surrounding areas as well as tourists go to the cave areas for picnic, cave climbing and swimming. Besides



Old Bau Bazaar in 1907. The background is Bukit Seriggok. The Chinese at the ground was still keeping the pig-tail.

producing minerals and a tourist destination, Bau is also producing palm oil, rubber, pepper, bird nests and other agricultural produces. A housing project consisting of 583 Rumah Rakyat, 110 units of double-storey medium cost terrace house, 27 units of shophouses is to be built at Jalan Jambusan, Bau. The project was launched by the Minister for Housing, Y.B. Dato Celestine Ujang on 14.8.1998. This project will certainly solve some of the problems on shortage of housing in the district. The whole project upon completion will cost in the region of RM8.8

million. Tasik Biru, the famous blue lake where tonnes of gold had produced ceased production in 1996. Anyway, it was restored as a prime tourist spot at the cost of RM500,000/- contributed by Gladioli Enterprises Sdn. Bhd. for Bau District on 31. 8. 1999. According to Encik Rodger Ling, the Manager of the Bukit Young Gold Mining Company, the lake surface has been expanded to 19 acres from the previous 15 acres and the deepest point is 300 feet as compared to 200 feet in 1982. According to the Minister for Tourism, Y.B. Dato Dr. James Masing, another RM2 million will be made available to extend the existing

canteen, to restore the bridge across the lake and to provide other basic facilities to the scenic lake. By then Tasik Biru will become a more attractive and popular tourist centre.

According to a survey conducted in February 1999, there are 175 units of shophouses in Bau Town. The details are as follows:-



*Civic centre
Bau.*

<i>Type of shophouses</i>	<i>No. of units</i>
1) Double-storey concrete shophouses along Jalan Datuk Salau	68
2) Double-storey wooden shophouses along Jalan Ong Guan Cheng	6
3) Double-storey concrete shophouses along Jalan Ong Guan Cheng/ Jalan Krokong	34
4) Double-storey concrete shophouses along Jalan Penghulu Durin	33
5) Double-storey concrete shophouses along Bau/ Kuching Road	29
6) Double-storey including one single storey concrete shophouses along Jalan Tukang Besi	5
Total:	----- 175

Besides the shophouses, Bau District Council has built RM350,000.00 Multi-purpose Hawker's Centre in 1998 and it was renovated in 1999 at the cost of RM160,000/-. another RM2 million Hawker Centre in 1994, one integrated market which was also renovated at the cost of RM200,000/- and RM618,000/- Bukit Mas Food Court to provide a venue for the hawkers and petty traders to do their business. It has one magnificent Civic Centre with Bidayuh culture and design, a mini sport complex, RM3.5 million indoor stadium, three government secondary schools, a General Hospital, two commercial banks, a theatre and several housing estates in the district. On 12.7.1986, the new temple building of famous Bong Low Sian Tze which was first brought over by the gold miners from Sambas Indonesia in 1854 was completed at the cost of RM700,000/-. This historical temple not only provides a place of worship



*Datu Bandar Abang Haji
Mustapha bin Abang Haji Moasili.*

for its followers but also it has become a tourist attraction and landmark of Bau Town.

XV. OUTSTANDING LEADERS IN KUCHING DIVISION

Kuching Division, being the centre of the government administration, political activities and commercial trading is the home of many outstanding figures in the State. Here are the outstanding leaders in the Division:-

- 1) Tun Datu Abang Haji Openg bin Abang Sapiee was the first local Governor of Sarawak from 16.9.1963 till 28.3.1969. Part of Rock Road from Pangkalan Batu up to the junction of Green Road, Batu Lintang Road in Kuching and another road in Sibu are named after the first local Governor.
- 2) Datu Bandar Abang Haji Mustapha bin Abang Haji Moasili (1906-1964)



Ong Ewe Hai.

was the first Chairman of Party Negara Sarawak (PANAS) which was registered on 6.4.1960. In 1964, he was appointed as Federal Minister without Profolio. A road and a gyratory in Kuching are named after him.

- 3) Ong Ewe Hai who was born in China in 1830 arrived in Kuching in 1846. He was among the first Chinese Pioneers who was active in business and shipping. He was appointed as the Kapitan China by the Rajah. He died in 1889. A street in Kuching was named after him in 1886.
- 4) Ong Tiang Swee, the son of Ong Ewe Hai, was born in Kuching in 1864 and he died in 1950. He was the first President of the Chinese Court and was appointed as the Kapitan China as well. A road in Kuching was named after Ong Tiang Swee.



Ong Tiang Swee.



Tan Sri Datuk Amar Ong Kee Hui.



Tan Sri Datuk Amar Stephen Yong.

- 5) Tan Sri Datuk Amar Ong Kee Hui who was born in Kuching in 1914 was the first Chairman of Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP) registered on 4.6.1959. He was the former Federal Minister of Science, Technology and Environment until he retired in 1982. Part of the Central Road between Jalan Budaya and Jalan Tabuan in Kuching is renamed after Tan Sri Ong.
- 6) Tan Sri Datuk Amar Stephen Yong was the second Chairman of Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP), the former State Deputy Chief Minister of Sarawak and the former Federal Minister of Science, Technology and Environment. A road between Jalan Batu Kawa and Jalan Batu Lintang in Kuching is named after him.
- 7) Tan Sri Datuk Amar Sim Kheng Hong from Party SUPP was the

former State Deputy Chief Minister of Sarawak and Minister for Finance. A road in Kenyalang Park and RM23 million Kuching Port Extension at Pending, Kuching are named after Tan Sri Sim. He died in Kuching on 1.2.1992.

- 8) Datuk Abang Haji Abdulrahim bin Abang Haji Moasili was the former State Deputy Chief Minister of Sarawak and the Minister for Local Government from 17.6.1966 to 6.7.1970. A road in Kuching is named after him.
- 9) Tan Sri Datuk Amar Abang Ikhwan Zaini was the former State Minister for Local Government from 24.9.1966 to 9.9.1974. A road in Kota Samarahan and Dewan Masyarakat Assijaya are named after him.



Tan Sri Datuk Amar Sim Kheng Hong.



*Datuk Abang Haji Abdulrahim bin
Abang Haji Moasili.*



*Tan Sri Datuk Amar Abang Ikhwan
Zaini.*

- 10) Datuk Teo Kui Seng was the State Minister for Natural Resources from 1.8.1963 to 24.9.1966 and Minister for Communication and Works from 24.9.1966 to 6.7.1970.



Datuk Teo Kui Seng.



Datuk Chong Kuin Kong.

- 11) Datuk Chong Kuin Kong from Batu Kawa was the State Assistant Minister for Youth, Sport and Culture from 9.9.1974 to until he passed away on 28.7.1992. A road in Kenyalang Park and RM13.4 million Batu Kawa Bridge are named after Datuk Chong. A community hall at Batu Kawa Bazaar is also named after him.

- 12) Datuk Abang Othman bin Abang Haji Moasili was the former State Minister for Welfare, Youth and Culture from 22.7.1963 to 23.9.1966.



*Datuk Abang Othman bin Abang
Haji Moasili.*



Datuk Ajibah binti Abol.



*Datuk Hajjah Hafsah binti
Haji Harun.*

- 13) Datuk Ajibah binti Abol was the former State Minister for Welfare from 7.7.1970 to 14.6.1976. She was born in Kuching on 24.9.1925 and died on 14.6.1976. A road in Kuching is named after her.



*YB Datuk Amar Dr. Haji Sulaiman
Bin Haji Daud.*

- 14) Datuk Hajjah Hafsah binti Haji Harun was the former Assistant Minister and State Minister for Culture, Youth and Sports from 1.11.1976 to 19.3.1987.



Y.B. Encik Yong Khooon Seng.

- 15) Y.B. Datuk Amar Dr. Haji Sulaiman bin Haji Daud who is the Member of Parliament from Petra Jaya. He was the Federal Minister of Agriculture until 9.12.1999.

- 16) Y.B. Encik Yong Khooon Seng who is the Member of Parliament from Padawan is the Parliamentary Secretary for the Federal Ministry of Works.



*Y.B. Datuk Abang Haji Abdul Rahman
Johari Tun Datuk Abang Haji Openg.*



*Y.B. Datin Paduka Hajah Sharifah
Mordiah binti Tuanku Haji Fauzi.*



Y.B. Datuk Ramsay Noel Jitam.

- 17) Y.B. Datuk Abang Haji Abdul Rahman Johari Tun Datuk Abang Haji Openg who is the Council Negri Member from Satok is the State Minister for Industry Development.



Y.B. Encik Sim Kheng Hui

- 18) Y.B. Datin Paduka Hajah Sharifah Mordiah binti Tuanku Haji Fauzi who is the Council Negri Member of Pantai Damai from April 1987 onwards is the State Assistant Minister for Welfare.



Y.B. Encik Alfred Yap Chin Lai.

He is the State Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Food Industry.

- 19) Y.B. Datuk Ramsay Noel Jitam is the Council Negri Member of Tanjung Datu, Lundu from April 1987 onwards.

- 20) Y.B. Encik Sim Kheng Hui who is the Council Negri Member from Pending is the State Assistant Minister of Industry Development from 1992 until today.



*Y.B. Dr. Abang Haji Abdul Rauf
bin Abang Haji Zai.*



Tan Sri Datuk William Tan.



*Tan Sri Datuk Abang Ahmad Urai
bin Datu Hakim Abg. Haji Mohideen.*

21) Y.B. Encik Alfred Yap Chin Loi who is the Council Negri Member from Batu Kawa became State Assistant Minister for Culture, Youth and Sports on 10.9.1992 and the State Assistant Minister in the Chief Minister's Office on 2.1.1998 until today.

22) Y.B. Dr. Abang Haji Abdul Rauf bin Abang Haji Zai who is the Council Negri Member from Demak Laut is the State Assistant Minister for Housing from 2.1.1998 until today.

23) Tan Sri Datuk William Tan was the President of Kuching Municipal Council from 1956-1959 and the former Speaker of Council Negri Sarawak from 1968 to 1973. A road

in Padungan area, Kuching is named after Tan Sri Datuk William Tan. He passed away in Kuching on 6.12.1998.

24) Tan Sri Datuk Abang Ahmad Urai bin Datu Hakim Abg Haji Mohideen was a State Assistant Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports from 9.9.1974 to 1985 and the former Speaker of the House of Senate, Malaysia.

25) Y.B. Dato Song Swee Guan from Padungan is the Member of Council Negri and a Member of Parliament of Kuching. He was appointed as the Speaker of Council Negri Sarawak with effect from 15.11.1996 until today.

- 26) Encik Lo Foot Kee from Kuching was the State Assistant Minister of Local Government from 9.9.1974 to 20.1.1979. He died in Kuching on 20.1.1979 at the age of 62.



Y.B. Dato Song Siew Guan.



Encik Lo Foot Kee.

- 27) Dr. Patau Rubis was elected as a Member of Council Negeri for Tasik Biru in 1983 and a Member of Parliament for Mas Gading in 1986. He was appointed as the State Assistant Minister for Infrastructure Development from 1987 to 1996. In 1996, Y.B. Dr. Patau Rubis formed Parti Reformasi Negeri Sarawak (STAR).



Dato Abang Abu Bakar Abang Haji Mustapha.



Dr. Patau Rubis.

- 28) Dato Abang Abu Bakar Abang Haji Mustapha was the Member of Parliament from Kuala Rajang. He was the Speaker of Council Negeri Sarawak from 1976 to 1981. He was the Federal Minister of Defence until 9.12.1999.

XVI. CONCLUSION

Kuching is relatively a new city but it shows the promise of a great metropolis. The present State Government is

determined to make Kuching City a Garden City in the year 2005. In actual fact, Kuching has been transformed into a beautiful urban centre with beautiful landscaping, open green areas, well planned commercial and residential areas as well as peaceful clean environment to live in. Today, the skyline of Kuching City is a blend of minarets and domes, religious roofs and spires, colonial forts and buildings, traditional Kampung houses and modern highrise buildings set amidst a profusion of greenery against the dramatic backdrop of Santubong and Matang mountains. Kuching City was greatly honoured when the Federal Minister of Health, Y.B. Datuk Chua Jui Meng announced that Kuching City was judged as a Healthy Living City by the World Health Organisation in 1998.

The population of Kuching City does not mind whether "Kuching" means "cat" or "Kuching River" or "Mata Kuching" fruit as long as the name "Kuching" brings prosperity and speedy development to the new born city. From a small settlement which the Sultan of Brunei gave to James Brooke 158 years ago, Kuching has really grown from a village into a city. Now with the city status being conferred on Kuching, it is up to the Government, the City administrations and the people of Kuching in general to develop it in order to fulfil the requirements and qualities of a city. Nine years after becoming a city, Kuching was declared as one of the best cities to live in among the major Asian capitals. Based on the survey conducted

by Asiaweek Magazine in November, 1997, Kuching City ranked the 21st best city out of 40 selected cities in Asia. In December, 1998, the same Magazine conducted the similar survey, Kuching City improved its ranking and became the 11th best city in Asia. Kuching was also rated as the 3rd safest of the 40 Asian Cities polled with 3.12 criminal cases per 10,000 people. The poll also showed that there are 300 vehicles per kilometre of the city's road systems and the dust suspended particles in the air is 90 micrograms per cubic metre.

The people of Sarawak call the cat with various names but mostly with a strong hint of the sound it makes. The Ibans call the cat "Mayau", the Chinese name it as "Mao", the Melanau "Ngau", the Kenyah "Miew" whereas the local Malays call it "Pusa". However, in the minds of the Sarawakians, it has become a reality that "Kuching" is "cat" even though "Kuching" may not mean "cat". Nevertheless, the lovely and helpful animal - cat - is not only a household pet among Malaysians but it has become the symbol of Kuching City.

During the closing of Kuching Festival at Kuching Waterfront on 30.8.1998, YAB the Chief Minister of Sarawak, Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr.) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud said, "Kuching City is poised to be the Cultural Garden of Sarawak in the next millennium, a model of racial harmony". Well, let us hope that the vision of YAB the Chief Minister of Sarawak to make Kuching City the Cultural Garden of Sarawak will come true in the next millennium.

CHAPTER 6

SAMARAHAN DIVISION

Map of Samarahan Division



Kota Samarahan - The Centre of Academic Development

I. INTRODUCTION

Samarahan Division, the 8th Division of Sarawak, has an area of 4,962 square kilometres and based on 1991 Census, it had a population of 166,959. The majority of the people are Malays, Bidayus, Chinese and Ibans. In 1999, based on the Mid-Year Population Estimate the population of Samarahan Division was 197,900.

Prior to 1.1.1987, Samarahan was part of the then First Division with its

headquarters at Kuching. After the declaration of the new division, Kuching Division remains three districts. Kota Samarahan (Muara Tuang) which was then a sub-district headquarters was upgraded to the district as well as the divisional headquarters of Samarahan Division on 1.1.1987. There are 485 Kampung/longhouses/settlements with 24,884 families in Samarahan Division.

Samarahan Division has three districts and four sub-districts as follows:-

<i>District</i>	<i>Sub-district</i>	<i>Population in 1991</i>
1) Samarahan District 1) (Muara Tuang)	Asajaya Sub-district (Nonok)	46,983
2) Serian District 1) (Upper Sadong)	Tebedu Sub-district	73,293
3) Simunjan District 1) (Lower Sadong) 2)	Sebuyau Sub-district Sadong Jaya (Pendam) Sub-district	46,683
Total:		166,959

*Aerial view
of Kota
Samarahan.*



Samarahan Division has 26 towns/
bazaars namely:-

- 1) Serian Town
- 2) Kota Samarahan (Muara Tuang)
- 3) Simunjan Town
- 4) Panchor Bazaar
- 5) Baru Bazaar (27th Mile Bazaar)
- 6) Baki Bazaar (32nd Mile Bazaar)
- 7) Tarat Bazaar (35th Mile Bazaar)
- 8) Rayang Bazaar
- 9) Tebakang Bazaar
- 10) Tebedu Bazaar
- 11) Pangkalan Tebang Bazaar
- 12) Mongkos Bazaar
- 13) Terbat Bazaar
- 14) Balai Ringin Bazaar
- 15) Tambirat Bazaar
- 16) Sambir Bazaar
- 17) Moyan Bazaar
- 18) Asajaya Town (Nonok Bazaar)
- 19) Asajaya Laut Bazaar
- 20) Semera Bazaar
- 21) Jemukan Bazaar
- 22) Sadong Jaya Bazaar (Pendang Bazaar)
- 23) Sebahang Bazaar
- 24) Sebuyau Bazaar
- 25) Gedong Bazaar
- 26) Mutiara Town

*Old Muara
Tuang Bazaar.*



II. MUARA TUANG, THE FORMER NAME OF KOTA SAMARAHAN

1) General Information

Before Samarahan was upgraded to a division, the former name of Kota Samarahan was Muara Tuang. Muara Tuang was only a sub-district of Kuching District and there was one Sarawak Administrative Officer (SAO) stationed there. Muara Tuang was a small Kampung Bazaar with only 5 wooden shophouses. Muara Tuang Sub-district Office was constructed in 1933. The building was made of multi-layered (Clinker built) walls. During the Japanese occupation, the building was used as the Japanese administrative office and fortress. The sub-district office is now being declared as one

of the historical buildings by the State Government of Sarawak under the Sarawak Cultural Heritage Ordinance, 1993.

A teacher by the name of Vun Mui Lan was posted to SRK Muara Tuang in 1971. She related how Muara Tuang was in the 1970s.

"Muara Tuang, in 1971, was a very small isolated Kampung. There was no road except footpaths leading to the Kampung. The only means of transportation was a motor launch, operated by a Foochow group to and fro Kuching/Muara Tuang/Sungai Pinang/Kuching daily. It took two hours for the launch to travel from Pending Wharf to reach Muara Tuang.

There were only five old wooden shophouses on stilt in Muara Tuang Bazaar, all operated by the Chinese traders. The population around the Bazaar and Kampung Muara Tuang was in the region of 500. A simple government primary school was constructed at the back of the Bazaar to cater Muara Tuang Kampung children. There were a few bicycles being ridden along the Kampung roads but most people walked around on foot.

There was a government dispensary headed by a Dresser to look after the health of the people in the sub-district. There was no maternity clinic yet. There was a sub-district office with an upriver agent there. The District Officer or Sarawak Administrative Officer, Kuching occasionally travelled to Muara Tuang for administrative work or sometimes accompanied some important people visiting the sub-district. However, there was an Agriculture Station where a few Agriculture staff were stationed there. The small handful of government officers had their own longboats or speed boats to travel around the sub-district. Life in those days were simple and peaceful and people in the bazaar and kampung were very friendly."

2) *Origin of the name of Muara Tuang and Samarahan*

How did Muara Tuang get her name? An oral tradition revealed that in the olden days the young people in the Kampung were very playful. Whenever they wanted to



*Lorong No. 1
Kampung
Muara
Tuang.*



*Kota
Samarahan
Arch.*

take their bath, each one tried to pour the other with a bucket of water but each one tried to avoid being poured. As time passed, the place where they used to pour water slowly became a small stream which flew into Batang Samarahan. Hence, the place was known as "Muara Tuang" (the river mouth for pouring water). However, the State

Government of Sarawak officially renamed the place from Muara Tuang to Kota Samarahan on 1.1.1987 when Samarahan was upgraded as a division.

According to a story related by the local people, "Samarahan" was actually two words "Sama Rahang" in Malay dialect and the meaning was "together we eat raw Rahang/Jering fruits". In the olden days, there were plenty of Rahang/Jering fruits in Samarahan area. Its scientific name is *Pithecellobium jiringa*. The local Malays liked to eat Rahang/Jering in raw with Belacan ingredients (sama makan ulam Rahang/Jering dengan Sambal Belacan). Slowly, the place was known as "Sama Rahang" and eventually, it was pronounced as "Samarahan" until today.

III. SAMARAHAN DISTRICT

Samarahan District covers an area of 594 square kilometres and based on 1991 Census, the district has a population of 46,983. However, according to the Mid-Year Population Estimates 1999, Samarahan District had a population of 56,600. The majority of the people in the District are Malays, Ibans and Chinese. It has one sub-district namely Asajaya, formerly it was



*Muara
Tuang
Sub District
Office
Building
(1933).*



*New
shophouses,
Kota
Samarahan.*



*Commercial
Centre,
Kota
Samarahan*

*Samarahan
Teachers'
College.*



*Sadong Jaya
Old Bazaar.*



*Sadong Jaya
New Bazaar.*



known as Nonok and according to 1991 Census the sub-district had a population of 13,322.

A large majority of the Samarahan population depend on agriculture as their main source of income. There are 78 Kampung and longhouses with a total of 5,565 families in the district. The local people are mostly farmers planting coconut, padi, cocoa and other annual crops. Some of them rear sheep and open up fish ponds under agriculture schemes. For those who stay along the coastal areas they become fishermen.

In the past, the district lacked of social and community facilities due to poor infrastructures which made Kota Samarahan (Muara Tuang) almost inaccessible by land. Before Datuk Mohammed Musa Road (Muara Tuang Road) was completed in the early 1970s, Kota Samarahan was relatively isolated from Kuching and its surrounding areas. At that time riverine transports were the only means of transportation and, hence, it was difficult for the people to market their agricultural produce. As a result, the economic growth in Samarahan was slow and remained almost stagnant. It was not until the expansion of various road networks that the socio-economic situation in the district began to show signs of improvement.

The Department of Drainage and Irrigation has contributed tremendously towards upgrading and improving the drainage system in the district. The Department turns the deep peat soil into fertile land for planting cash crops. Besides, the Integrated Agriculture Development Project (IADP) is entrusted with the tasks to develop 86,170 hectares of land with *in situ* development in Kuala Samarahan covering an area of 11,311 hectares.

Since 1986, the district has achieved tremendous development. On 26.7.1996, PPES Wang Mas Poultry Farm at Muara Tuang Road (Renamed as Datuk Mohd. Musa Road) costing RM3.8 million commenced its operation. Sadong Jaya (Pendamb) along Batang Sadong was connected by a road from Kota Samarahan. Along the road, vehicles have access to Tambirat, Sambir, Moyan, Asajaya, Semera and Jemukan. The 36 kilometre Sadong Jaya road was opened to traffic on 15.10.1990.

In order to improve and to provide better administrative service in the district, YAB the Chief Minister of Sarawak, Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud laid



*Asajaya
New
Township.*



*District Office
Cum
Community
Hall Asajaya.*

the foundation stone of a new Asajaya/Sadong Jaya District Office and Community Hall at Asajaya on 23.8.1991. On 26.5.1993 Asajaya/Sadong Jaya District Office cum Community Hall in Asajaya costing RM7.9 million was declared open. On 4.8.1993, the Samarahan Rehabilitation Centre for the

handicapped was completed at the cost of RM6.4 million. From that time onwards, the handicapped children can have a better caring home for them to live and to be trained as more useful citizens in the country. On 15.2.1997, the new town, Bandar Baru Asajaya was born. There are 44 units of concrete double-storey shophouses, 24 units of lockup shophouses and Council Market in Asajaya Town.

Secondary school education in the district was also greatly improved with the completion of RM6.4 million Asajaya Secondary School on 21.8.1993. On 31.8.1993, the foundation stone for University Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) was laid in Kota Samarahan and Unimas Experimental Theatre was declared open on 9.4.1996. On 10.8.1996, Unimas Research Park was also launched. Today, there are four tertiary institutions namely University Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS), MARA Institute (University) of Technology, Cermat Jaya Matriculation College and Samarahan Teachers' College being established in Kota Samarahan. However, Cermat Jaya Matriculation College has moved down to Jalan Pending, Kuching at the beginning of 1999.

In Kota Samarahan, an area of 102 hectares of land have been set aside for light industrial purposes. At the moment, 31 hectares of the land have been developed. Along Datuk Mohd. Musa Road to Kota Samarahan more and more factories and housing projects are being built and some of



*Cermat Jaya
Matriculation
College.*

them are still under construction. These factories are providing more job opportunities to the local people and the housing projects are providing essential accommodation to the local people as well as workers in and around Kota Samarahan.



IV. UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA SARAWAK (UNIMAS)

The first University being established in Sarawak is University Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS). It is located at Kota Samarahan, the divisional headquarters of Samarahan Division and it is 27 kilometres or about 30 minutes' drive from Kuching City.

Unimas was established as a result of the meeting of vision and wishes of the founding fathers in the persons of YAB Dato' Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, the Prime Minister of Malaysia, YAB Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud, the Chief Minister of Sarawak and Y.B. Datuk Amar Dr. Sulaiman Haji Daud, the then Federal Minister for Education of Malaysia for the future of the State of Sarawak and Malaysia as a whole. The most important factor is of course to provide a venue for the higher education of a university in Sarawak in order to achieve the goal of national mission.

On 1.9.1992, a Steering Committee for the establishment of the University, chaired by the then Minister of Education was first met to start the ball rolling. The Vice-Chancellor designate was appointed on 1.10.1992. Unimas was incorporated as Malaysia's eighth university on 24.12.1992. The corporate Academic Plan (January 1993), laying out the

academic blueprint, was presented by the Vice-Chancellor to the third and last Steering Committee on 19.2.1993. In May 1993, a temporary campus was being planned. Admission for the first batch of 119 students began on 8.8.1993 and the students moved into the current buildings before the beginning of the second semester in October of the same year. By April 1995, all buildings planned for the temporary campus were completed at a total development cost that exceeded RM20 million. The current main campus at Kota Samarahan is however only a temporary one. Nevertheless, it caters the current needs of all facilities, institutes, centres and divisions. It is well equipped and fully wired with a fibre optic backbone that provides Internet access to every corner of the campus.

The permanent UNIMAS Campus lies to the west of Kota Samarahan about 14 kilometres southeast of Kuching City to which it is lined by an expressway or ring road

running along the western boundary of the site. It is planned so that the campus will not only be accessible by road but also has a direct connection for boats from Kuching via Sungai Bayor. For its development, UNIMAS is presented with a site approximately 1,050 hectares. This includes 165 hectares which is part of the original site and an addition of 885

*The entrance
of Universiti
Malaysia
Sarawak
along Datuk
Mohd. Musa
Road.*



hectares for acquisition. The University has planned to accommodate 12,000 full-time students in the year 2005 and for strategic planning purposes, plans have also been projected for a full-time student population of 20,600 by the year 2020.

During the third convocation of UNIMAS on 3.7.1999, the Chancellor of UNIMAS who is also the Yang Di-pertua Negeri Sarawak, Tun Datuk Patinggi Ahmad Zaidi Adruce bin Muhammed Noor announced that RM850 million had been allocated for the first phase of development of the permanent campus. Another RM550 million to build the Medical and Health Science Faculty as well as a teaching hospital is forthcoming. By the year 2001, the permanent campus of UNIMAS would be completed while entering the 21st century.

The corporate mission of UNIMAS is to establish itself as an exemplary university of internationally acknowledged stature as well as a scholarly institution of preference and choice for both students and academic staff through the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research and scholarship. It will do so by offering a range of opportunities in education, training and scholarly service. Besides, through the strategic and innovative application of knowledge, it will enhance the quality of the nation's culture and the prosperity of its people.



*General View
of Universiti
Malaysia
Sarawak
(UNIMAS).*

The members of the University Board of Directors are as follows:-

Chancellor

TYT Tun Datuk Patinggi (Dr.) Ahmad Zaidi Adruce bin Muhammed Noor

Pro Chancellor

YAB Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud

Vice Chancellor & Chairman Senate

Professor Dato' Zawawi Ismail

Chairman

Tan Sri Datuk Amar Haji Bujang Mohd Nor

Members

Tan Sri Datuk Amar Haji Hamid Bugo
Professor Dr. Hassan Said
Datuk Amar (Dr) Leonard Linggi Jugah
Mr. Alex Ling Lee Soon
Dato' Megat Zaharuddin Megat Mohd Nor
Datuk Shahril Tan Sri Shamsuddin



*YB Dato Haji Adenan
Haji Satem.*



YB En. Michael Manyin ak Jawong

V. UNIVERSITY TECHNOLOGY MARA

In July 1973, the Sarawak Branch Campus of Institute Technology Mara (ITM) was first established in Kuching with the assistance and cooperation of Sarawak State Government, Sarawak Foundation and ITM itself. From its establishment until July 1987, Sarawak Campus was temporarily housed at the Batu Lintang Teachers' Training College in Kuching. With the assistance of the State Government of Sarawak especially the State Minister of Industrial Development, YB. Datuk Abang Haji Abdul Rahman Johari Tun Abang Haji Openg, ITM Sarawak moved to the Agriculture College at Semongok which was vacated by UPM when it moved to their new campus in Bintulu. At that time, ITM Sarawak's permanent campus was also being developed at Semariang. In June 1989, ITM Sarawak moved to Semariang.

Due to the short comings of the

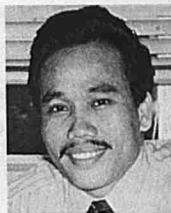
campus in Semariang, the Sarawak State Government finally offered ITM Sarawak a piece of land in Kota Samarahan in order to upgrade the Campus to accommodate more students and provide better facilities. On 26.3.1997, the new campus of ITM was completed and opened for qualified students to study there. Apart from offering full time courses up to advanced diploma levels, ITM Sarawak Branch also conducts off-campus Programme and Distance Learning Programme for those who are working as well as those who are unable to attend the full time classes. ITM Sarawak is the only branch campus in the ITM system to conduct advanced diploma courses apart from the main campus in ITM Shah Alam. In 1998, there were 3,400 students in Institute Technology MARA, Kota Samarahan. With effect from September 1999, ITM is known as University Technology MARA (UNITEKMA).



Datuk Robert Jacob Ridu.



Datuk Michael Ben ak Panggi.



En. Nelson Kundai.

VI. OUTSTANDING PERSONNELS IN SAMARAHAN DIVISION

- 1) YAB Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr.) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud is the Member of Council Negri from Asajaya and Member of Parliament of Samarahan. He is the Chief Minister of Sarawak from 1981 until today.
- 2) YB Dato Haji Adenan Haji Satem is the Member of Council Negri from Muara Tuang from 20.1.1979 until today. He is the State Minister of Agriculture and Food Industry.
- 3) YB Encik Michael Manyin ak Jawong is the Member of Council Negri from Tebedu. He is the State Assistant Minister of Land Development from 2.1.1998 until today.
- 4) Datuk Robert Jacob Ridu from Tarat was the State Assistant Minister of Infrastructure Development from 26.3.1981 until March 1987 and the Speaker of Dewan Undangan Negri Sarawak from 18.3.1987 to 28.2.1994.
- 5) Datuk Michael Ben ak Panggi from Tebedu was the State Assistant Minister for Youth Culture and Sports from 23.9.1979 until March 1987. Now he is the Temenggong for Bidayuh Community in Samarahan Division.
- 6) Encik Nelson Kundai who was a Member of Council Negri from Tarat was the State Minister for Youth and Sports from 7.7.1970 to 9.9.1974.

VII. SAMARAHAN AGRICULTURE PRODUCE

Samarahan Division is one of the most active and advanced divisions agriculturally. This is due to the close proximity to the higher demand of food crops, livestock and fishery products from Kuching City as well as the general soil suitability in the division conducive for diverse cropping pattern. This is evidenced from the land use (area size) pattern on settled Agriculture for Samarahan Division which is 14.04% as against the state average land utilisation on settled Agriculture of only 3.4%. As a whole, Samarahan Division is an agricultural area where it produces rubber, pepper, padi, coconut and other agricultural produce. Based on the report of Divisional Agriculture Office, Kota Samarahan in 1997, the division has planted and produced the followings:-

<i>Agriculture Produce</i>	<i>Area Planted (ha)</i>	<i>Production</i>
1) Rubber		
- Ordinary Rubber	9,500	263 tonnes
- High yield Rubber	5,500	1,027 tonnes
2) Padi		
- Wet Padi	10,150	18,400 tonnes
- Hill Padi	3,600	2,000 tonnes
3) Pepper		
- White Pepper)	2,200	567 tonnes
- Black Pepper)		2,760 tonnes
4) Coconut numbers	15,100	49,000,000 in
5) Cocoa	7,400	

Samarahan District is very famous for its pineapples especially Nanas Jospine. At the moment, more than 300 hectares of the suitable land in the district are planted with pineapples. Most of the big and sweet pineapples are sent to Kuching for sale at RM1.50 to RM2.00 per fruit. Samarahan sweet oranges are also popular because the district produces nearly 75% of the sweet oranges for the State. By the year 2000, the target for sweet oranges planting is 1,200 hectares.

Coconut shells are in abundance in Samarahan. Hence, Carbon Supplies (Sarawak) Sdn. Bhd. is established in Kota Samarahan on 2.4.1997 to produce activated coconut shell carbon and export to overseas market. In 1999, the company achieves world standard in ISO 9002.

VIII. SERIAN DISTRICT

1) *Historical Background*

Serian Town is the administrative headquarters of Serian District. The district covers an area of 2,040 square kilometres and based on 1991 Census it had a population of 73,293. The majority of the people here are Bidayhs, followed by the Chinese, Ibans and Malays. However, based on 1999 Mid-Year Population Estimate, the district had increased its population up to 84,800. The district has one sub-district called Tebedu.

According to written records, Serian (Upper Sadong District and Simunjan (Lower

Sadong District) were formerly a district known as Sadong District with Simunjan as the district headquarters from 1901 to 1955. In February, 1955, Serian (Upper Sadong District) was officially split from Simunjan (Lower Sadong District) and a full district of its own was born. The first colonial District Officer of Serian District was Mr. H.R. Harbow.

In the olden days, there were durian trees around Sungai Rian. After the establishment of the settlement along Sungai Rian, people slowly called the place "Se-Rian" rather than Sungai Rian until today. In actual fact, Serian is a durian town where good quality of durians are produced at the nearby kampungs and longhouses. Based on the agricultural statistic, there are more than 80,000 durian trees in the district. That is why Durian is the symbol of the town.

2) *The Founding of Serian District/Town*

Initially, the District Office of Serian was located at Gedong (now still under Simunjan District). Gedong derived its name from "Gedong Padi" because in the olden days, merchants used to have paddy stores there. However, in 1929, the District Office



Durian - the symbol of Serian Town.



A section of Serian Town.

was moved from Gedong to Tebakang. "Tebakang" is actually the name of an inland fish which is common in the area and its scientific name is *Helostoma temminckii*. A fort known as Tebakang Fort was built on the top of a small hill near Sadong River, behind Pangkalan Embong, Tebakang. Besides being used as a fort, the District Office,

Serian was also housed there. The structure of the fort was built of Belian in the Malay style.

The District Officer of Sadong District or his Native Officers made occasional visits to the administrative centre for Ulu Sadong at Tebakang from time to time. Traversing this community was a tributary of Sadong River called Batang Kayan which restructured the nesting inclination of the Malays to its right bank and the Bidayuh and Chinese to its left. The Chinese Hakkas who were traders occupying the immediate bank. The conscientious entrance of a few European Missionaries of the Roman Catholic Church built the first school in the district in 1928.

Meanwhile, opting out of this community was a small Chinese family, sandwiched between the Sadong River and its tributary, Sungai Rian about 13 kilometres coastward from Tebakang, began serving the trading needs of its neighbouring villages. This was the shop that started the establishment of a town - Serian. In early 1930's, due to administrative and governmental



Aerial view of the old Serian Town in the 1950s.



Tebakang Fort.

reasons, the District Headquarters was shifted from Tebakang to overlook this lone settlement and was renamed after the tributary although the governing tongue in those years found it easier to pronounce "Se-Rian" than Sungai Rian. On 24.9.1930, the construction of Kuching/Sri Aman (Simanggang) road reached Serian Town.

By then, with the arrival of a few more Chinese traders, a trading centre had taken shape where the first shop first stood. However, because the site was subject to floods that often resulted in great losses, it was later abandoned and Sungai Serian was crossed for the higher ground beyond it. The structures which dotted this landscape was Serian Town in its infant stage. By 1939, the town had well over 10 wooden shophouses.

Tebakang Fort remained as it was. In the 1950s it was renovated to accommodate various government agencies. During World War II, it was used by the Japanese invaders as an administrative centre. In 1994, it was used as Pusat Giat MARA until today.

3) *Pre-Japanese Occupation*

Before the Japanese invasion in 1941, the racial disaffection was inherent in the invaders to the Chinese in Sarawak especially to those began to relish the prosperity of their business in Serian. The shopkeepers began to desert and desolate the town. It was struggling to survive as Banana Currency overflowed through some shop windows and doors whose owners had not bothered to shut these apertures as their economic and financial situation worsened, preferring to just pack their bags for the isolation of the less harsh jungle settlement in anticipation of peace.

Along with them went their business knowledge which later accounted for the birth of such bazaars as Tebedu and Balai Ringin.

4) *Japanese Occupation and its Effect*

In the meantime, the Japanese were commanding the construction of the Kuching/Serian Road to completion and the abortive irrigation project at Samarahan. Natives, Chinese and other foreigners caught in the war tide were compulsory recruited to provide the labour required. Under the strain of physical exploitation rebellious tendencies surfaced in sporadic quarrels only to be quelled by some Japanese-handpicked local force who spied, policed and reported on those who trod on the "Words of the Emperor". Construction of the Sadong Bridge had also began, but was completed only after the invaders had left. Anti-Japanese feeling was saturating by 1945 and finally the Japanese surrendered on 14.8.1945.

5) *Colonialism*

The task of restoring order was left in the hands of the colonial power. Serian Town began another phase of growth. The Roman Catholic Church-owned school known as St. Teresa's School was restarted as a boarding school. In 1946, the shophouses totalled nearly 20. In 1950 the Kuching/Serian road was

bituminized and with the inception of the Upper Sadong District Council in 1959, the town had already far surpassed the booming days of the pre-war period.

6) *Serian Town today*

Serian Town is fast developing for the past 25 years and it has now become the biggest town in Samarahan Division. Rubber gardens at the back of Serian Old Bazaar gave way to Council Market, Community Hall and Bus Station. More shophouses, industrialised buildings and residential houses take over the empty space. More modern buildings are added in Serian Town. Landscape changed from a small trading centre for Ulu Sadong 70 years ago to a present-looking Serian Town. Serian is a tourist centre where thousands of foreign and local tourists passing through the town everyday either to Sri Aman Division or to Tebedu Border Point or just to spend their time in Serian. Ranchang Pool which is about 3 kilometres away from Serian Town and Taman Danau (Lake Garden) have attracted thousands of tourists to enjoy the natural and cool surroundings. Some tourists have commented that Serian Town is one of the cleanest towns in Malaysia.

The old building of District Office Serian was pulled down sometime in

1970. A new District Office building costing Malaysian Ringgit \$123,000/- was constructed and it was declared open by YAB Datuk Patinggi Abdul Rahman Ya'kub, the then Chief Minister of Sarawak on 28.8.1971.

Native participation in commerce and trade is very encouraging. With the assistance from MARA, a row of 6 shophouses were constructed to provide an opportunity for Bumiputra to fulfill the New Economic Policy. The Serian Co-operative shops, a three-storey building was also put up in 1980 under the generous loan from Co-operative Centre Bank. A RM3.5 million of Nurses Trading School Complex was constructed at the side of Serian District Hospital in early 1982. The Complex has not only enlarged the Serian Township but also provided a training ground for the nurses in the State.

Serian Town is blessed with a commercially strategic location in that it is linked 64 kilometres westward to the State Capital, Kuching City by the best stretch of highway in Sarawak and northward to Sri Aman and Sibul. The only tea plantation in Sarawak is located at Mayang along the Mongkos Road. The Bidayuh longhouse at Mongkos is a tourist spot in the district. Serian District started to plant oil palms and on 10.8.1996, the RM20 million

Sarawak Palm Oil Mill was launched in Serian. The oil palm estates and mills have created many employments for the local people in the rural areas.

Based on a survey conducted in February 1999, there are altogether 282 units of shophouses excluding the industrialised shophouses near Kampung Cina and Serian By-Pass in the town. The details are as follows:-



Tebelu Bazaar.

The expansion of Serian Town is more towards Serian By-Pass area. With the construction of both Serian By-Pass and Serian/Tangga By-Pass, more fund is being channelled into the maintenance of ground, urban road, sanitation, street lighting and recreational facilities in and around the town. The expansion of the town warrants more housing estates including the low-cost housing projects are being implemented in the outskirts of the town. Besides, there are 31 units of lock-up shops, Council Market, Council Multipurpose hawker centre and one cinema, Lina Theatre, are built in the town. Moreover, Serian has an outdoor stadium, an indoor mini stadium and a community hall at the side of the town. Serian Township is still expanding. Another 21 units of double storey concrete shophouses, are under construction along Serian By-Pass. Upon completion of more

<i>Type of shophouses Within Serian Town</i>	<i>No. of units</i>
1) Single-storey wooden shophouses	4
2) Double-storey wooden shophouses	25
3) Double-storey concrete shophouses	117
4) Three-storey concrete shophouses	103
5) Four-storey concrete shophouses	16
<u>Outskirt Serian Town</u>	
1) Double-storey wooden shophouses along Jalan Melor	9
2) Double-storey concrete shophouses at Ayer Manis Housing Estate	8
Total	282

shophouses, Serian will become a bigger town. By then, the vision of Serian District Council to turn Serian into a Municipal Council by the year 2015 is not far from its reality.

7) Tebedu Sub-district

Tebedu is a sub-district of Serian and based on 1991 Census, it had a population of 6,560. In Bidayuh language, "Bedu" means a dry place. Tebedu Bazaar, 42 kilometres from Serian is the legal and only over land drive-in gateway to Kalimantan, Indonesia. On 25.2.1991, the Tebedu Immigration Complex and the international road connecting Tebedu with Entekong in Kalimantan Barat, Indonesia was officially declared open. A new township known as Mutiara Town was being built on 7.8.1993. Today, this border town has 68 new concrete shophouses but not even one is operating for business yet. The old Tebedu Bazaar which consists of 20 wooden shophouses is still the centre for border trading in the district.

XI. SIMUNJAN DISTRICT

1) Historical Background

Simunjan Town is the administrative headquarters of the Simunjan District. The



Border Entry Point, Tebedu.



Bandar Mutiara, Tebedu.



Tebedu Border Point towards Indonesian Border.

district covers an area of 2,328 square kilometres and based on 1991 Census, it had a population of 46,683. The majority of the people in the district are the Malays, Ibans and Chinese. In 1999, based on the Mid-Year Population Estimate, the population of Simunjan District had increased up to 56,500. It has two sub-districts namely Sadong Jaya (Pendam) and Sebuyau. Sebuyau was formerly a sub-district of Sri Aman. Sebuyau Bazaar which was established by the Chinese Teochew in 1892 consists of 57 shophouses and 6 units of new concrete shophouses are still under construction in June 1999. Due to closer proximity to Simunjan, it was transferred to Simunjan District on 18.8.1990. The other sub-district Sadong Jaya was formerly known as Pendam. Based on 1991 Census, Sadong Jaya had a population of 15,814 whereas Sebuyau had a population of 9,226. "Pendam" in Malay dialect means graveyard. In order not to call the people there staying in the graveyard, the authority changed the name of Pendam (graveyard) to Sadong Jaya. There are 7 units of wooden double-storey shophouses and 4 units of wooden single-storey shophouses in the old Bazaar as well as 8 units of concrete double-storey shophouses in the new Sadong Jaya Bazaar. The 138 rare artefacts believed to be 700 to 800 years old were excavated from

an area formerly the site of an old longhouse built in 1880 at Kampung Senangeh, Sadong Jaya in 1997. This was a concrete proof that Sadong Jaya area had been inhabited for at least a few centuries already.

Based on written records and oral traditions, Upper Sadong District (Serian) and Lower Sadong District (Simunjan) were formerly a district known as "Sadong District" with Simunjan as the district headquarters. The first District Officer for Sadong District at that time was Mr. I.K. Caldecot who stationed at Simunjan for a period of 4 years from 1901 to 1904.

Upper Sadong and Lower Sadong remained as a district for a period of about 54 years. In February 1955, Upper Sadong (Serian) was officially separated from Lower Sadong



Sebuyau Bazaar.

(Simunjan) and a full district of its own was born. At that time, Mr. W.C.B. Wilson was the first District Officer for Simunjan and Mr. H.R. Harlow was made the first District Officer for Upper Sadong (Serian).

2) *How did Simunjan get its name?*

There are many legends as to how Simunjan got its name. Below are the possible versions.

(a) *Version 1 (Chinese Version)*

Upon the discovery of coal at Gunung Ngeli in the late 19th Century, quite a number of Chinese Hakka migrated from Sambas, Kalimantan Indonesia to Lower Sadong to work in the coal mine. From Sambas, they came on foot to Bau and from Bau, they used boats to go to Kuching. From Kuching they boarded sailing boats to reach Lower Sadong. The whole journey took them about 10 days to reach their destination. When they arrived at Lower Sadong, they complained the place was "really too far". In Chinese Hakka, it pronounced as "Si-foon-jan". Eventually, the place was known as "Si-foon-jan" and later it was pronounced as "Simunjan" until today.



The Landmark of Simunjan-Burung Mujan.



Part of Simunjan Town.

b) *Version 2 (Iban Version)*

In the olden days, the area around Gunung Ngeli and Simunjan area always had mist in the early morning. The Ibans in the area said that it might rain

(in Iban it is called Ujan) at the later part of the day. The two words "Simun" and "Ujan" always repeated initially but eventually it was pronounced as "Simunjan" until these days.



Aerial view of Simunjan Town.

(c) *Version 3*
(Malay/Iban Version)

The area around Simunjan in the olden days was a jungle and full of wild animals and birds. There was a type of bird called Asian Paradise Flycatcher (in local term it is known as Burung Lelangai Mujan) which are plentiful in the area. Within the area, there were plenty of insects and, hence, Burung Mujan liked to catch them for food.

While selecting the landmark for Simunjan, Simunjan District Council with the full concurrence of the councillors selected Burung Mujan because the name of "Simunjan" might derive from the bird called "Mujan".

In the Simunjan Town Square, an artefact pair of Burung Mujan is being displayed there as the landmark of the town.

3) *Coal Mining in Simunjan*

Simunjan Town, which is situated at Lower Sadong River was once an important port from 1872 to 1932. During that period ships used to ply up there for loading coal from the nearby mines at Gunung Ngeli, a hill about 5 kilometres east of Simunjan.

Although Sadong Coal Mine was officially mined on 31.1.1872, a group of Chinese from Sambas Indonesia under the leadership of Liew Syn Ted migrated over and settled in Simunjan sometime in 1850 to participate in the coal mining activity there. However, in 1867, after the abortive Anti-Rajah Movement in Bau in 1857 the White Rajah Government invited Liew Syn Ted and his group to move from Simunjan to Bau in order to rework in the gold mines.

Coal was actually discovered soon after James Brooke became the first White Rajah of Sarawak in 1841. An

attempt was made to mine the coal in 1850s but it was making a loss. In 1872, the Sarawak Government advertised in the Sarawak Gazette to invite any company to work in the coal mine but there was no taker. In May 1874, it was reported in the Sarawak Gazette that the Sarawak Government itself was mining the Sadong Coal Mines and produced sufficient coal to supply their own steamships.

At first buffaloes were used to haul the coal from the mines to the wharf. In 1896, the old track between the mine and the wharf was replaced by iron rails and a locomotive had taken the place of the water buffaloes. In 1896, when Mr. Fisher was the manager of the Simunjan Coal Mine, the production of coal had been steadily increased up to 20,000 tonnes. It remained above the average amount sold until the mines were closed down on 1.1.1932.

About 1,000,000 tonnes of Simunjan coal were produced between 1874 and 1931 of which over 800,000 tonnes were sold, the rest being used at the mine and supply to the local locomotive. During the Japanese occupation from 1941-1945, some prospecting of coal deposit on the south side of Gunung Ngeli east of the old working sites near Sungai Lepong.

The Japanese opened an adit and obtained about 3,000 tonnes of coal.

According to Mr. J.W. Evans who was the manager at that time, the main reason for the closing of the coal mine in 1932 was due to the loss of the local market and the conversion from coal to oil for many ships and power stations. Moreover, the deposits were no longer considered to be of commercial value.

4) *Batang Sadong Tidal Bore*

Batang Sadong which flows through Serian and Simunjan districts is the second river besides Batang Lupar with Benak movement (Tidal Bore) in the river. When the tide comes up to Sadong River from the sea, it forms a big wave, especially during the time of full moon and the new moon, the Benak is very high. It looks like a big wall of water moving up the river fast. It makes a loud roaring noise which can be heard from far away. At Lubok Bunting where the river is very wide, the tidal bore turns round and goes back towards the sea. Then it turns round again and rushes further upriver. According to Pemanca Bong Tian Chin of Simunjan, sometime in the late 19th Century, rows of wooden shophouses with Attap roof were built along Batang Sadong near to Jalan Lau Loong Quee and Jalan

Masjid. However due to the tidal bore called "Benak" which constantly eroded the riverbank, all the shophouses, the Chinese Primary School, Chinese Temple and Government buildings were washed away by Benak one after another. In the end, all shophouses, the primary school, Chinese Temple, Police Station, District Office and government quarters had to be dismantled and moved further inland.

5) *Agriculture Produce*

The Simunjan District, covering extensive swamps on the Lower Sadong River and coastal areas at the mouth of the river, is a fertile padi growing area and oil palm planting area. In 1996, Land Custody and Development Authority (LCDA) had commenced RM72 million oil palm planting scheme in Sadong Area (5,910 hectares) and Gedong Area (5,770 hectares) and it is expected to be completed by the end of 1999. Based on Agriculture Department data in 1997, the district had planted 5,124 hectares of wet padi and 643 hectares of hill padi which produced 10,571 tonnes of wet padi and 440 tonnes of hill padi respectively. In 1997, Simunjan District had planted 968 hectares of pepper vines and produced 2,158 tonnes of black pepper and 415 tonnes of white pepper. Besides, the district had

2,640 hectares of land planted with rubber trees which produced 950 tonnes of rubber sheets and 8,349 hectares of coconut producing 22,743,000 coconuts in 1997.

In October 1998, Padi Beras National (Bernas) started an initial 31 hectares padi project at Lubok Tranggas near Gedong using mechanisation. If it is proved to be successful, it will form the basis for the commercialisation of large scale padi planting in the State so as to reduce the import of rice from other countries.

6) *Simunjan Today*

Simunjan District has 207 Kampung/longhouses with a total of 2,785 families. It is a multi-racial district whereby all the communities live and work together happily. Simunjan Town is 165 kilometres by road from Kuching and 169 kilometres from Kota Samarahan.

Although Simunjan town has a history of more than 130 years, the development of the town is slow but steady. In 1958, the present Simunjan Town was rebuilt at the existing site after the land in the old town was washed away by the Benak. A total of 36 units of double-storey shophouses were built and completed in 1960. Later on, Simunjan Cinema was built along Jalan Nanas but due to poor



Ikan Bulu - the symbol of Samarahan.

business, it was converted into a hotel on the top floor and 14 units of shophouses on the ground floor. 2 units of three-storey concrete buildings were also built at the side and at the moment, the only bank in the town known as Bank Pertanian Malaysia is housed there. There are 3 other units of double-storey concrete shophouses and 4 units of single-storey shophouses also being erected along Jalan Nanas. There are another 5 units of single-storey shophouses built at the side of Simunjan District Library. Based on the survey carried out in September 1998 there were 67 units of shophouses, two Council food



Freshwater Prawn - the symbol of Samarahan.

and drink buildings, Council wet market, Fire Station and other government agencies found in the town. In 1962, the Chinese Primary School was rebuilt at the existing site and the Chinese Temple was shifted to the present locality in 1973. On 14.3.1996, the Chinese Primary School was gutted by fire but it was rebuilt and completed on 5.1.1998. In 1993, Simunjan District Hospital was completed to look after the health of the people in the district. There are two secondary schools in Simunjan. On 13.1.1966, Simunjan District Office was completely gutted by fire and it was rebuilt in the following year. At Pentam (Sadong Jaya), the Health Sub-Centre and Sub-district office were opened to the public on 20.7.1974. Ten days later, the RM1.6 million Gedong Road was opened for used by all vehicles. On 29.7.1986, Simunjan was accessible by road from Kuching/Sri Aman Road through Punda Road to the town. The new Police Station was completed in 1997 to serve the public.

Simunjan is famous for the Simunjan fragrant rice and giant fresh water prawns whereas its sub-district, Sebuyau is important for the production of Terubok fish and fish roe as well as its granite quarry.

X. KOTA SAMARAHAN TODAY

Samarahan District which has an area of 540 square kilometres had a population of 46,983 in 1991 Census. However, in 1999 based on the Mid-Year Population Estimate, the district had a population of 56,600.

Kota Samarahan, located 33 kilometres from Kuching, is fast emerging as the new commercial and administrative centre of Sarawak. The town serves as a key growth centre to the coastal and riverine settlement along Batang Samarahan and its surrounding areas. UNIMAS is expected to bring robust development through creation of new employment opportunities and a larger population base to a division which is currently economically dependent on agriculture. Kota Samarahan is growing into a tranquil university township in comparison with the bustling Kuching City.

The landmarks of Kota Samarahan are fresh water prawns and Ikan Bulu because both of them are very common and can easily be caught in Batang Samarahan. The statues



Resident's Office, Kota Samarahan declared open on 28. 8. 1992.



MARA Institute Technology (ITM) Kota Samarahan.

of the prawn and Ikan Bulu are erected at the entrance of Kota Samarahan District Council Building.

From a Kampung status with the old name Muara Tuang where there are only five wooden shophouses on stilt established more than 60 years ago, the new name Kota Samarahan was used upon the upgrading of

Samarahan Sub-district to the status of a division on 1.1.1987. Within a period of 12 years, the small Kampung Bazaar has transformed itself into a modern town. 10 units of 3-storey concrete building were constructed along Jalan Datuk Mohd. Musa where banking facility (Bank Utama and Bank Islam) is available there. Adjacent to the original Muara Tuang wooden bazaar, 2 rows of 20 units of double-storey shophouses, Kota Samarahan Council Market and Council Hawker Stalls are also built to cater the increasing population in the new town. A bus station is also established nearby.



Swimming Pool.

Kota Samarahan displays its modern architectural ingenuity. Government buildings such as District Office, Land and Survey Department Office, RM2.4 million Samarahan District Council Building which was declared open on 21.9.1990 and Resident's Office which was declared open on 28.8.1992 were being built one after the other in Kota Samarahan. The Civic Centre costing RM7.1 million was also completed and declared open on 5.3.1995. Four light industries namely Sarawak Coconut, Borneo Enamel, KIG Ceramics and Carbon Supplies are established and in production. Besides, Government Housing Project known as Perumahan Rakyat and private residential areas are being built in order to provide



Outdoor Stadium.

accommodations to the increasing population in Kota Samarahan.

Kota Samarahan has achieved tremendous improvement in infrastructure development and other related amenities over the past years. Most of the road infrastructures in Samarahan are implemented by Jabatan

Kerja Raya (JKR). One of the most significant road developments is the Kampung Entingan/Kampung Melayu Road which was completed in 1996. The road enables the population of Asajaya and Sadong Jaya to travel directly to Kuching without using the ferry service at Kota Samarahan. The medical service, water and electricity supplies and the good network of roads to the rural areas of the division have been greatly improved. The recent completion of 30.2-kilometre Kuching/Samarahan Outer Ring Road or Expressway costing RM120 million has cut down the distance and time to travel to and fro Kuching/Kota Samarahan and Serian areas. The Outer Ring Road was declared open by the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, YAB Dato Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi on 20.7.1999. Sports and recreational facilities such as swimming pool and outdoor sport complex are also constructed to provide better sport facilities in the town. The construction to RM11.9 million Samarahan Divisional Mosque to be completed in September 2000 will be the catalyst of growth for the emerging township of Kota Samarahan. Upon completion, the mosque can accommodate 3,200 people. An integrated fish-landing complex costing RM30 million is to be built within two years' time at Tembirat near Kota Samarahan. Once completed, it will provide landing facilities for both local and foreign



RM 2.4 million Kota Samarahan District Council. It was declared open on 21. 9. 1990.



Civic Centre Kota Samarahan. It was declared open on 5.3.1991.

fishing boats and to reduce the State's fish import bill. The complex will have the capacity for at least 15 deep-sea fishing vessels to land their catches at any single time.

The sittings of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) and the new campus for MARA Institute Technology (ITM) in Kota Samarahan have further opened up Kota

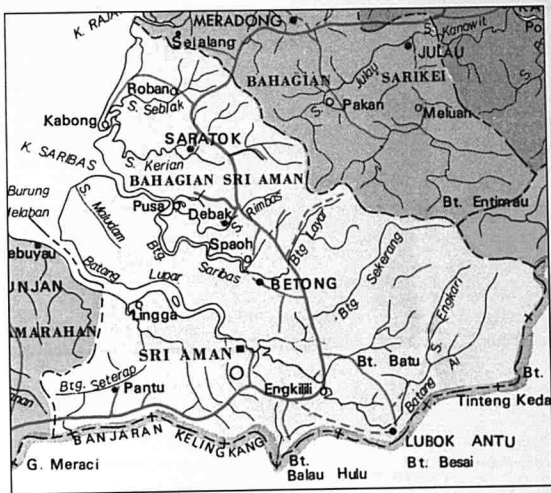
Samarahan to the state and to the whole nation as the Centre of Academic Development. On 22.11.1999, RM68 million Samarahan Teachers' College was declared open in Kota Samarahan. Built on a 26 hectare site, it has 28 lecture rooms, 5 blocks of hostel for 1,050 trainees, an Islamic Studies Centre and a mosque. It is the first smart college in Malaysia, equipped with a computer network for teaching information technology skills in order to prepare teachers to face the challenges of education in the new millennium. Speaking at his 63rd birthday celebration at Kota Samarahan on 21.5.1999, the Chief Minister of Sarawak, YAB Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr.) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud stressed that Kota Samarahan would be transformed into the biggest, excellent and well-known education centre in the state within the next 10 years. He said, "Besides the existing

UNIMAS, ITM and Samarahan Teachers' College, a medical centre, the Technology and Science Park and other educational centres especially those related to information technology, science, research and development are already on the government's agenda". In actual fact, Kota Samarahan is achieving its target as a top educational and information technology centre now.

Under the able and far-sighted leadership of the Chief Minister of Sarawak YAB Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud, the future of Kota Samarahan to become the Centre of Academic Development or "Academic City", an economic growth centre and Samarahan Division to become a productive agriculture area have become a reality.

SRI AMAN DIVISION

Map of Sri Aman Division



Sri Aman - The Town of Peace

I. INTRODUCTION

Sri Aman Division, formerly known as Simanggang, is the Second Division of Sarawak. It has an area of 9,647 square kilometres and based on 1991 Census, it had a population of 165,252 of which the majority are the Ibans, followed by the Malays and the Chinese. Based on 1999 Mid-Year Population Estimate, the Division had a population of 189,600. In 1997, the Department of Agriculture statistics recorded a total of 935 villages and 22,423 farm families. The Division is accessible by river and Pan Borneo Highway.

Historically, Sri Aman (Simanggang) Division was under the rule of Brunei Sultanate until 1853 when Sultan of Brunei ceded all the land between Sadong River to Oya River to the Brooke Regime. From that time onwards, Sri Aman (Simanggang)

Division formed part of the Sarawak Territory. Moreover, it was on 1.6.1873 that the division became a residency with its Divisional headquarters established at Simanggang.

Topographically, it has three broad zones viz: coastal, mid-land and hilly interior, which are traversed by numerous meandering rivers. The nature of the terrain and soil present poses much limitation to a large scale of agricultural development. Excluding the low lying, flood prone coastal swamps and rugged interior land associated with infertile soils, the total available suitable land for agriculture is estimated to be around 2,412.5 square kilometres only.

Sri Aman Division has four districts and ten sub-districts namely:-



Aerial view of Sri Aman Town.

<i>District</i>	<i>Sub-district</i>	<i>Population in 1991</i>
1) Sri Aman District (Simanggang)	1) Meludam Sub-district 2) Lingga Sub-district 3) Pantu Sub-district	60,085
2) Lubok Antu District	1) Engkilili Sub-district	22,270
3) Betong District (Saribas)	1) Spaoh Sub-district 2) Debak Sub-district 3) Pusa Sub-district	44,979
4) Saratok District (Kalaka)	1) Nanga Budu Sub-district 2) Roban Sub-district 3) Kabong Sub-district	37,918
	Total:	165,252

There are altogether 23 towns/bazaars in the Division:-

- 1) Sri Aman Town (Simanggang)
- 2) Betong Town
- 3) Saratok Town
- 4) Meludam Bazaar
- 5) Lingga Bazaar
- 6) Banting Bazaar
- 7) Sungai Tenggang Bazaar
- 8) Pantu Bazaar
- 9) Kerangas Gayau Bazaar (Lachau Bazaar)
- 10) Engkilili Bazaar
- 11) Batu Lintang Bazaar, Undup
- 12) Lubok Antu Bazaar
- 13) Spaoh Bazaar
- 14) Nanga Budu Bazaar
- 15) Bungin Bazaar
- 16) Debak Bazaar

- 17) Pusa Bazaar
- 18) Kaki Wong Bazaar
- 19) Roban Bazaar
- 20) Kabong Bazaar
- 21) Gerigat Bazaar
- 22) Sessang Bazaar
- 23) Beladin Bazaar

II. ORIGIN OF THE NAME OF SIMANGGANG

According to a version related by the Iban community in Sri Aman, about two hundred years ago, there were two Chinese Teochew families using Sampan boats to trade along Batang Lupar River. Both stationed at the mouth of the present Simanggang River. Due to business conflict and jealousy, they were not in good terms with each other. One day one Iban from Batang Ai wanted to visit one of

the Chinese families in the Sampan Boat, but it happened that the whole family was in the farm. The Iban then asked the owner of the other Sampan Boat, "Where do the family of so and so go?" The Chinese man in the boat replied in half Teochew and half Iban dialect "Si magang! Si magang!" "Si" in Chinese Teochew means "die" and "Magang" in Iban language means "all of them". Therefore, "Si magang" means "all of them had died already". From that time onwards, anybody who visited the Chinese family for business in that area would call the family "Si Magang" and eventually the place was pronounced as "Simanggang" until 1973.

Another version disclosed that a teacher in Sri Aman when she was asked by the students in the olden days what was the origin of the name of Simanggang. She answered, "Cina Parai Magang" (It means "all Chinese died already" in Iban language) Perhaps the answer might have some connection with the first version.

Today Sungai Simanggang still exists and it flows at the side of the present Police



*Sri Aman
Main Bazaar
in 1998.*



*Sri Aman
(Simanggang)
Main Bazaar
in 1950.*

Station down to Batang Lupar passing at the upper reach of Bandar Sri Aman.

III. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF SRI AMAN TOWN

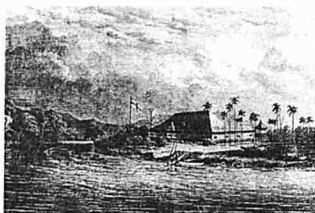
Sri Aman Town is the Divisional Headquarters of Sri Aman Division and it is 190 kilometres by land from Kuching, the



Lau Chek

State Capital of Sarawak. Sri Aman was known as Simanggang prior to October, 1973. The symbol of the town is a pair of doves greeting visitors and the symbol indicates that Sri Aman is a town of peace in Sarawak. Based on historical record, the first group of Chinese headed by Lau Chek sailed directly to Batang Lupar areas in 1830 to look for good farming land. They settled there for a while but later they moved over to Kuching and settled down at Satok area. Both written records and oral traditions predate the existence of Simanggang Bazaar to its predecessor at Nanga Skrang where Fort James was first built in 1849. There were about five Chinese shops and a small Malay Kampung first established at Nanga Skrang but the low-lying land and its proneness to

flooding in the area caused Fort James and Nanga Skrang Bazaar to be shifted to the present Simanggang (Sri Aman) site sometime in 1864. At first the Chinese Teochews built about 10 Attap shophouses at the existing Main Bazaar. Based on Sarawak Gazette dated 1.4.1872, Simanggang had 46 shops with probably several hundred Chinese. Mr. A.B. Ward who was serving in Simanggang noted



*Fort James,
Skrang
(1849 - 1863).*



*Simanggang
Town, 1950
(The road
passing
through the
padi field is
Club Road).*

that the Bazaar was a row of open-fronted shops extending along the river-bank. In 1894, Tze Hun Kok Chinese Temple was built in front of Simanggang Town. The first school to be built in Simanggang was St. Luke's Primary School at Sabu Road in 1863. Abang Aing Primary School, the second school in Simanggang, was built in 1920. Nine years later, Chung Hua Primary School Simanggang was constructed in 1929 to cater the Chinese children in the area. In 1956, Chinese Foochows moved from Sibu and settled down in Simanggang for rubber planting. In 1959, there were 3,000 acres already planted with rubber. After the signing of the "Memorandum of Understanding" between the then Chief Minister of Sarawak, Datuk Patinggi Haji Abdul Rahman Ya'kub and the then communist leader, Bong Kee Chok, on 21.10.1973, Simanggang took its new name: Bandar Sri Aman. Most of the people in Sri Aman are farmers, planting padi, pepper, rubber, fruits and vegetables on a small scale. Some are fishermen and there are merchants and loggers as well.

During the Brooke Rule, Sri Aman Division was administered by a Resident, who enjoyed tremendous riches and power. He often changed his policies on important matters such as land and taxes. The Simanggang Malays became the intermediary between the Resident and the lower rank officers of the Brooke Regime and the general public. On the whole, the White Rulers brought minimal changes and minimal improvement to the people. Only very few of the Ibans, who had no formal

education, had the courage to oppose the unfair 'head taxes' (Cukai Kepala) imposed by the Brooke Regime.

The Malays of Kampung Hulu and Kampung Tengah of Bandar Sri Aman came from the various Malay Kampung around the Skrang River, which before the Brooke era, had been a very powerful centre of administrative and trade activities. Some Malays were said to have immigrated to Bandar Sri Aman (Simanggang) from smaller villages around Nanga Lemanak, near Engkilili. Abang Aing and Panglima Taib were two well-known Malay leaders responsible for the consolidation of these Malay fragmented villages, around Nanga Skrang and Nanga Lemanak, which had been frequent targets of attacks by the pirates. They were among the most respected Malay leaders in the Skrang and Batang Lupar areas. They worked very hard to unite their followers and to leave their smaller Kampung to settle in much bigger, safer and more peaceful villages such as Kampung Hulu and Kampung Hilir in Sri Aman.

As Bandar Sri Aman grew into an important seat of government and a centre of business activities, more and more people especially the Chinese and the Ibans as well, came to settle here in large number. In fact, the entire Simanggang Bazaar has been the landmark of Chinese settlement here. Many Iban longhouses and some Malay Kampung are also found at the outskirts of Bandar Sri Aman. Sri Aman (Simanggang) is also popularly known as the centre of Iban community.

IV. ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

In the past, the primary economic activity in Sri Aman Division was farming and the people were engaged in rubber planting, hill and wet padi cultivation. In the 1989, production of coal in Silantek began. Lately, oil palm plantations have been set up on a commercial scale in all the districts. SALCRA is mainly responsible for the establishment of oil palm schemes. In Lubok Antu District, the main areas planted with oil palms are Merindun and Batu Kaya whereas in the Sri Aman District, the areas are Pakit, Po-ai, Nyelam, Empadi, Pantu, Entawa and San Ugol. In Saribas and Kalaka districts, the areas are mostly along Sri Aman/Saratok Road and Ulu Roban as well. Today, more than 13,000 hectares of land in Sri Aman Division are planted with oil palms. Besides, there are two big rubber schemes in Melugu and Skrang areas. Another big project known as Integrated Agriculture Development Project (IADP) is also being implemented in Kalaka/Saribas areas.

There are two oil palm mills at Lubok Antu and Saratok. One oil palm complex costing RM4.2 million was built near Roban. All these commercial projects not only create employments but also bring extra income to the local people. For the coastal dwellers, the people are largely engaged in inshore fishing in places such as Kabong, Beladin, Pusa, Meludam and Lingga.

Sarawak first eco-hotel is located at Batang Ai hydro-electric dam. There are many longhouses along Batang Skrang

which are popularly visited both by foreign tourists and local people. The Skrang Safari disembarks at Pangkalan Pais along Sri Aman/Betong Road. The tourists go to Skrang longhouses to spend night there in order to attend cultural and traditional shows performed by the locals. Tourism brings foreign tourists and foreign money to the area and at the same time the local Ibans earn extra income from them by providing transport, accommodation and cultural performance to them.

The two most popular River Safari destinations are:-

1) The Skrang River Safari

Skrang is an exciting destination for visitors who wish to see and experience the life in a traditional longhouse, once the home of the notorious "pirates" and head-hunters. The journey to Skrang is about 232 kilometres from Kuching. It takes about 4 hours by road and followed by a one and half hours by motor-propelled longboat journey along the Skrang river.

Spending the night at a longhouse to see the traditions and customs of the Ibans is a great experience. The highlight of the Skrang River Safari is an evening entertainment by the longhouse residents, featuring traditional dances and music. Tuak; a specially brewed rice wine, is served during the evening entertainment.

A jungle walk on the following day is equally interesting. It is an exciting experience to stroll through the dense tropical rainforest, where stimulating sights and sounds open up a world of wonderful discovery.

2. The Lemanak River Safari

Lemanak is a tributary of the main Batang Lupar River. Many traditional longhouses can be found situated along the river bank. Like Skrang, the Lemanak River is another exciting destination within easy reach from Kuching. About 220 kilometres away from Kuching, Lemanak can be reached in about 4 hours by road. The journey passes through the scenic countryside, rubber and pepper plantations, padi fields, sago palms and followed by an hour of motorised-longboat ride penetrating the tropical rainforest through meandering stream.

An overnight stay gives you an opportunity to have a glimpse to the lifestyle of the longhouse and its



*Magnificent
Chinese
Temple, Sri
Aman.*



*Sri Aman
Bus Station.*

people. An evening entertainment by the longhouse folks is most interesting and educational. Traditional dances and music are the highlight of the evening entertainment. Cock-fighting and jungle trekking on the following day are other highlights of the Lemanak River Safari.

Silantek Coal

Silantek coal field which is situated within Pantu Sub-district contains a measured reserve of 7.3 million tonnes, with inferred reserves exceeding a further 50 million tonnes. The earliest reference of Silantek coal was in 1868. Between then until 1962, several investigations were undertaken. Further investigations between 1969 to 1981 were carried out by several oversea companies. Finally, in 1984, a mining certificate was issued to the Lucky Hill Mining Sdn. Bhd. over the eastern part of the Silantek coal field covering an area of 2,100 hectares. Production began in May 1989 and 9,979 tonnes of coal were produced during that year of which 7,990 were exported. Production for 1990 was 15,843 tonnes. However, the operation was suspended in early 1991.



*Resident's
Office,
Sri Aman.*



*Sri Aman
Divisional
Mosque.*

V. HISTORICAL SITES

Sri Aman Division has its fare share of interesting historical sites, forts and tourist spots. There are altogether seven forts built by the Brooke Regime partly to provide its daily administration to members of the

public but mainly to control and attack Sarawakians who refused to be ruled by the White Men. The forts are:-

<i>Name of Fort (Kubu)</i>	<i>Year Built</i>
1) Kubu James, Nanga Skrang (Dismantled in 1863)	1849
2) Kubu Alice, Sri Aman	1864
3) Kubu Lily, Betong	1855
4) Kubu Charles, Kabong	1878
5) Kubu Rancee, Saratok	1888
6) Kubu Arundell, Lubok Antu	1912
7) Kubu Leonora, Engkilili	1924

1) Fort Alice (1864)

Fort Alice, which commands magnificent view from the banks of the Batang Lupar, represents a unique historical heritage of Sri Aman. It was declared as a historical monument on 10.2.1971. It is one of the oldest forts in Sarawak, having originally been built at Nanga Skrang in 1849 (then known as Fort

James named after the first White Rajah Sir James Brooke) and then re-erected, at its present site using much of the original building materials in 1864.

The fort, like other forts in Sarawak, is built of Belian and it is the only fort of its kind in the State. It has a square floorplan with a watch-tower at each corner. What is attractive about this fort is the large open central courtyard as well as its entrance steps which can be drawn up in time of attack. The whole fortress is surrounded by a fence of sharpened iron spikes.

Fort James was built to control the activities of the Ibans (especially Hero Rentap and his Skrang allies) from the Saribas and the Skrang areas. On 31.7.1849, a great battle was fought at Beting Maru between Kuala Saribas and Kalaka rivers. In 1863, Fort James was dismantled and in 1864, the building materials were shifted 10 kilometres downriver to its present location. It was then renamed Fort Alice in 1870 after Rancee Margaret's second Christian name. There was an old tradition observed at the fort for a hundred years until 1964. This was the evening call at eight o'clock by the policeman until the police moved out of the fort in 1965. It was the time for the Resident of Simanggang (Sri Aman) Division to have his dinner and the drawing bridge was drawn up for the night.



*Fort Alice,
Sri Aman.*

The call (in Iban language)

Oh ha! Oh ha! Oh ha!
Jam diatu pukul lapan
Tangga udah ditarik
Pintu udah ditambah
Orang ari ulu
Orang ari ili
Nadai tau niki kubu agi

Translation

Oh ha! Oh ha! Oh ha!
The time is now eight o'clock
The steps have been drawn up
The door is closed
People from upriver
People from downriver
Are not allowed to come to
the fort anymore

In those days, Fort Alice mounted some guns and the White Rajah garrisoned it with a strong detachment of Sarawak Rangers. The fort was situated in a strategic position to prevent the powerful Skrang Ibans from passing downriver to the sea to join their strong partners, the Saribas Ibans. These Dayaks were supposed to be ferocious "pirates" who practised rampant head-hunting raids against the weaker tribes in the lower Batang Lupar.

This gave the White Rajah and his administrators ample excuse to curtain their so-called activities. It was also the same site as that taken by Captain Keppel of the Dido, in his expedition against Skrang "pirates" in 1844. It was obvious that it took the White Rajah a great deal of trouble to subdue the strongly Anti-Rajah Movement and he was determined that he would not allow

them a free reign in their own area. On 31.7.1849, with the help of three British warships, he launched an attack against the natives at night at Beting Maru between Kuala Saribas and Kalaka rivers, and thus put an end to their political power. The fact that the British

warships had been used to suppress the local natives caused a great uproar in the British Parliament.

The natives were no match for the guns of the British warships. Immediately after this, Mr. Crookshank was sent to build the fort at Skrang and put it under the charge of Sherip Matussin. Mr. Bereton, only twenty years of age was also sent to take charge of the fort assisted by Alan Lee.

In 1850, Rentap, a local warrior and hero decided to attack the fort known as Kubu James. Before he could do so, Bereton and Alan Lee brought up a strong force of Balau Ibans from the Lingga River, went upriver to meet him. Alan Lee was killed on 26.4.1850 by Layang, the son-in-law of Rentap, but Kubu James remained intact. From that day onwards, there had never been any fear of attack on the fort. However, it took three expeditions on part of the White Rajah to defeat our Hero

Rentap, but he never surrendered to the intruder - Brooke.

From 1864 to 1869, Fort Alice came under Henry Stuart Johnson, the younger brother of the second White Rajah, who was Resident of Batang Lupar and Saribas. Fort Alice was also the first station in which the third White Rajah served his cadetship at the age of seventeen. The disastrous cholera epidemic started from Fort Alice in 1902 when 2,000 men out of a force of 12,000 died without even coming within sight of the enemy.

For a long time, Fort Alice represented a complete station. Besides serving as a fort, it was also used as the Officers' Quarters, the Government Offices, the Court House, the Police Station and even the Prison Department. Fort Alice has been gazetted as a historical building but there are plans to restore it to its former glory. The Deputy Chief Minister of Sarawak, Datuk Amar Dr. George Chan inspected the historical fort on 12.1.1999 to plan for the reconstruction of the fort at the estimated cost of RM1.8 million.

Although there were isolated cases of head-hunting during the reign of Rajah Charles Vyner Brooke, there was no longer any major war. The

different native tribes and ethnic groups had already realised the importance of peace and stability in the country and the feuding tribes began to make peace. On 4.8.1920, Sir Charles Vyner Brooke witnessed a big peace-making ceremony in Simanggang. At this peace-making ceremony the Ibans of Ulu Ai and Engkari, and the Ibans of Skrang, Layar and Lemanak, in front of the third White Rajah, expressed their decision to end their feuds and make peace with each other.

2) *Rumah Sri Aman*

Rumah Sri Aman, the most unique building found in the area is another historical building found in the town. Situated high on the hill, it was formerly called the Government Rest House. Before it became the Rest House, it was the official bungalow of the Resident, Simanggang. It was



*Rumah
Sri Aman.*

here that a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the then Chief Minister Tun Abdul Rahman Ya'kub and Bong Kee Chok, Commander and Commissar of North Kalimantan Peoples' Army (Pasukan Rakyat Kalimantan Utara or PARAKU) on 21.10.1973, thus ending many years of strife and conflict. On 19.3.1974, it was officially renamed as "Rumah Sri Aman".



Memorandum signing ceremony at Rumah Sri Aman between YAB the Chief Minister of Sarawak, Tun Datuk Patinggi Haji Abdul Rahman Ya'kub and Director of PARAKU Bong Kee Chok on 21. 10. 1973.

The 'Operation Sri Aman' was the peace movement that ended the ten-year turbulence in Sarawak. This was a significant event in the modern history of Sarawak. The armed struggle by the communists had caused a heavy loss in terms of finance and lives. The Sarawak Government's effort in setting up the Rajang Security Command (RASCOM) in 1972 gradually gained control of the situation as well as the setting up of armed Vigilante Corps (RELA) by the local residents. First batch of Sarawak armed communists laid down their weapons and returned to society.

Rumah Sri Aman is now a VIP rest house used by ministers and top government officers. The surrounding area of pine trees and tall trees has been earmarked for a public park soon.

3) "Benak" - Tidal Bore

The people of Bandar Sri Aman have a habit of grouping themselves along Batang Lupar riverbank or go up to the hill where the famous Fort Alice is sited in order to see for a phenomenon that is rarely seen elsewhere. Usually it occurs during the third day and eighteenth day of the Chinese lunar calendar month and when the high tide is rushing up the mighty Batang Lupar. To the locals, this phenomenon is like a dragon which roars by an incredible speed for it often rushes up so fast that one could miss it with a blink of the eye.

When will the phenomenon occur? Sometime last year, the author went to Sri Aman. It happened it was the

third day of the Chinese lunar calendar month, the strange phenomenon could be seen at the small jetty along Batang Lupar. At first I saw express boats at the side of the wharf giving out a shrilling alarm and then the activity along Batang Lupar heightened with all small ships and boats moving towards the centre of the river. Suddenly I saw the express boats rocking dangerously from side to side. The sound grew louder and I saw big waves crashed onto the shore. The water was roaring, rushing and boiling and swirling angry torrent a few metres away from the river bank. It happened so in a sudden and it ended in such a sudden as well. People went back to their houses and the river bank remained quiet. This strange phenomenon is locally known as "Benak". To the locals, the "Benak" has the head, the tail and the children.

What is "Benak?" Based on the interview with the locals, it is a tidal bore created when the force of the tide water rushes up the river causing the river emptying into the sea to reverse its flow. The height of the tidal bore depends on the time of the year, weather and phase of the moon. The tidal action is significant for the speed in which a



A pair of doves - the symbol of peace in Sri Aman.



Sri Aman Library Building.

large volume of water fills the river channel.

The unique feature about Benak in the Batang Lupar is that it reaches its height at the river in front of the Sri Aman Town, which is an astounding

38 kilometres from its mouth. The tidal bore travels further up river for another 30 kilometres to reach Engkilili, a total of 68 kilometres from South China Sea! Another unique feature of the Batang Lupar "Benak" is that it can reach up to a height of more than one to two metres, which is supposed to be the highest in the world. To me, "Benak" is obviously one of the local wonders in Sarawak. To the locals, they can see the "Benak" very often. Nevertheless, outsiders including myself who view the "Benak" definitely envy the local wonder in their life time.

4) *Batang Ai National Park*

The Park has an area of 24,040 hectares and its locality is within Lubok Antu District in Sri Aman Division. It was gazetted as a National Park in 1991.

This beautiful national park is the home of one of the world's most endangered species, the Orang Utan. Besides being home to many other protected wildlives like the hornbills and gibbons, it is also the water catchment area of Sarawak's only artificial lake. This huge lake stretches up the Engkari and Batang Ai valleys. The dam is part of the Batang Ai Hydro-electric complex. Beyond the artificial lake, more than an hour's boat ride upriver from the

dam, visitors can see beautiful lowland mixed dipterocarp forest, with drooping trees overhanging the rivers. River transport is the main mode of communication here. The rivers are fast flowing, clear and very refreshing. During dry weather, the water level gets quite low and visitors have to help pushing their boats upstream - an enjoyable experience.

Another major attraction upriver is the Iban longhouses. Visitors can get to experience the authentic longhouse atmosphere as most of the longhouse dwellers still practise their traditional lifestyle. The Ibans also produce local handicrafts, like their 'Pua Kumbu', rattan backpacks 'Selabit' and rattan mats 'Tikai Lampit'.

At the moment, the National Parks and Wildlife Office does not have any visitor facilities yet. Some private tour companies, however, do provide visitors accommodation. Trails are now available in the park. There are 4 trails to choose from and they pass through mixed dipterocarp forest, old secondary forest, active shifting cultivations and ancient burial ground.

The Park is located about 250 kilometres from Kuching City. Batang Ai Hilton Longhouse Resort and several longhouses have accommodation facilities just outside the park.

This Park is unique in having the local communities involved in its management. The communities have formed a co-operative known as 'Kooperasi Serbaguna Ulu Batang Ai' and is helping the Forest Department to conserve the park. Visitors are encouraged to use the boating facilities offered by the co-operative as their funds are kept within the community for continued development purposes.

VI. SRI AMAN OPERATION: SARAWAK'S SUCCESS IN ERADICATING THE COMMUNIST THREAT

The day 4.3.1974 was a memorable date in the history of Sarawak. It signified a turning point for the State and its multi-racial populace.

To mark the victory against communism, a conference, referred to as the Sri Aman Conference, was held at the Dewan Pembangunan Tun Abdul Razak in Kuching on 4.3.1974 at 9.00 a.m.. It was attended by 100 journalists from all over the world as well as the reporters from the state and national newspapers. The date saw the beginning of the Sri Aman Operation and it signified the disarmament and surrender of 585 communists headed by Bong Kee Chok. To mark the success of Sri Aman Operation, the State Government of Sarawak declared 5.3.1974 as a public holiday throughout the State.

For 12 years, from December 1962 to March 1974, the security situation in Sarawak was very bleak so much so that Sarawak was nicknamed "Little Vietnam". But, through Sarawak's new leadership under the then Chief Minister of Sarawak, Datuk Patinggi Haji Abdul Rahman Ya'kub, and other leaders who were far-sighted, the security situation which resembled Vietnam changed into one which was stable and Sarawakians began to feel the real significance of independence through Malaysia.

The Sri Aman Operation was not an act of selling the country's sovereignty. It was the wish of all leaders to bring an end to a conflict, to give the leaders the opportunity to think and devise plans for development as well as to project the State's new image in Malaysia. The communist insurgency was a total fruitless and brutal affair. Many lives were lost along the way. It could not be ended through bloodshed but through winning the hearts and minds of the terrorists. The Sarawak Government, with the help of the Federal Government, changed its tactics to win over the so-called Pasukan Rakyat Kalimantan Utara (PARAKU). Development plans to improve the political, economic and social spheres of life of the people were well under way, even before Operation Sri Aman was in force.

Operation Sri Aman was done through the vision and courage of Sarawak leaders, especially that of Datuk Patinggi Haji Abdul Rahman Ya'kub who had been responsible for the peace, stability and prosperity in

Sarawak. He was also fortunate to have ministers and officials who shared his vision and far-sightedness. It was indeed a relief to know that intensive communist insurgencies in the State were changed to a surrender for peace through the Sri Aman Operation. The principle behind the Sri Aman Operation had worked because our leaders had the knowledge and insight into the motives of the communist guerrillas. Knowing the cause of their grouses made it easier to find solutions to these problems.

The success of the Sri Aman Operation was hailed throughout the world as a stroke of genius and a victory not only for the people of Sarawak but also the triumph of democracy over communism. Datuk Patinggi Haji Abdul Rahman Ya'kub was hailed as a hero of democracy.

Without the Sri Aman Operation, Sarawak would still be in a state of war and unrest. It would not be able to enjoy the progress because a major portion of the revenue earned would be channelled to military expenditure to combat the communists menace. With the revenue diverted to military spending, Sarawak would have been still backward and poor.

VII. HERO OF SRI AMAN DIVISION

The most outstanding and well-known Sarawakian leader in the olden days was none other than the famous Iban hero from Sri Aman Division. He was Panglima Rentap who refused to be ruled by the White Rajah. "Rentap" which means "one who makes the



*Panglima
Rentap*

world shake" in the Iban language was born about the year 1800 and lived most of his life in Ulu Skrang/Saribas river areas.

When Rentap first heard the changes of the Government in Kuching in 1841 and the plans that James Brooke wanted to put an end to "piracy" along the coast of Sarawak, he was both amused and angry. He was amused at Brooke's claim to govern Sarawak and was determined to prevent him from interfering with his traditional way of life. To him, James Brooke was nothing more than a pirate himself, a man who stole the land, took taxes and imposed unjust laws on his people. Moreover, Rentap hated James Brooke who brought in other foreigners to rule over his people.

Rentap and his men took an active part in the famous Battle of Beting Maru on 31.7.1849 against the Brooke's force. When

Rentap realised that Brooke had won the battle, he withdrew to Bukit Sadok together with his followers and he considered himself as "Rajah Ulu" or "Inland King" to fight against the intruder - James Brooke. On 26.4.1850, Rentap ambushed Brooke's force at Nanga Skrang and his son-in-law, Layang, managed to kill Alan Lee, the English Officer-in-charge of Lingga reinforcement.

First Sadok Expedition was organised by Charles Johnson Brooke on 2.6.1857 to attack Rentap at Sadok. The stronghold of Rentap was unable to break through after Brooke's force spent eight days on the mountain top. So the first Sadok Expedition against our hero Rentap by the Brooke authority was unsuccessful.

In August, 1858, another attempt by Brooke's force to crush our Hero Rentap's power was a total failure again on the part of the intruders. Rentap and his followers bravely drove away the Brooke's force with poisoned darts, stones and gunfire.

The third attempt by the Brooke Regime against our Hero Rentap was carried out on 16.10.1861. With better equipment including a rocket-firer, a 12 pounder gun "Bujang Sadok" and a 6 pounder gun together with Chinese workers, Negro troops and many Dayak as well as Malay forces, the intruder managed to break through Rentap's stronghold.

When Rentap realised that he and his men could not defend his fort at Bukit Sadok anymore, he and his force retreated

to Bukit Lanjak and then moved down to Entabai, Kanowit. Although his power might have been broken by the intruder, Rentap did not surrender. When he died of old age sometime in 1870, he was not buried but honourably laid down to rest in a mortuary known as "Lumbong" and his remains was kept in a jar.

Rentap was a great leader who had the fighting courage and bravery, talent and ability in leading the attacks and defences against the White Men's rule. In spite of his limited manpower and inferior weapons, Rentap and his force could go on fighting for eight long years and withstood three onslaughts of the intruder's force. Rentap was indeed a man of principle. He swore that he would never see the face of a white man again. It was true that he never saw any white man again until his death. He met several defeats but he never surrendered. Although he had been branded as a great rebel leader by the Brooke's Regime, he was actually a freedom fighter and a nationalist who fought against the intruder. A new memorial tomb was installed for him by the State Government of Sarawak as a token of Rentap's fight for freedom and independence from the Brooke's Regime at Bukit Sibau, Pakan on 28.10.1989. It was declared open by Y.B. Tan Sri Datuk Amar Alfred Jabu ak Numpang, the Deputy Chief Minister of Sarawak and the then Minister for Agriculture and Community Development.

In Betong, he was well remembered. The Saribas District Council Building,

Dewan Masyarakat Building and a town road are all named after this great man. The lounge at Damai Lagoon Hotel is known as "Rentap Lounge". Rentap was declared as one of the heroes of Sarawak by the State Government of Sarawak on 27.7.1993. His figure was portrayed in relief on a plaque around the base of the Heroes' Monument at Museum Garden, Kuching. Until today, Rentap is still being considered as the most famous warrior and obdurate opponent to Brooke Rule in the history of Sarawak.



*Datuk Amar Dunstan Endawie
Enchana.*



Datuk Simon Dembab Maja.

VIII. OUTSTANDING PERSONNELS IN SRI AMAN DIVISION

Sri Aman is a rural division but it has produced outstanding personnels not only in the olden days such as Hero Rentap but also after Sarawak achieved independence within Malaysia in 1963. Below is the list of outstanding personnels in the division.

- 1) Tan Sri Datuk Amar Stephen Kalong Ningkan from Layar Betong, Saribas was the first Chief Minister of Sarawak from 22.7.1963 to 16.6.1966 and from 7.9.1966 to 23.9.1966. He was the first Secretary-General of Sarawak National Party (SNAP) registered on 10.4.1961. He passed

away in Kuching on 31.3.1997 at the age of 76. A road in Kuching is named after him.

- 2) Datuk Penghulu Tawi Sli from Sri Aman was the second Chief Minister of Sarawak from 17.6.1966 to 7.9.1966 and from 24.9.1966 to 6.7.1970. He died on 22.12.1987. A road in Kuching and another road in Sri Aman are named after him.
- 3) Datuk Amar Dunstan Endawie Enchana from Krian Saratok was the State Minister for Local Government from 22.7.1963 to 16.6.1966 and from 7.9.1966 to 23.9.1966 and Deputy Chief Minister of Sarawak from 9.9.1974 to 26.3.1981.



*Y.B. Tan Sri Datuk Amar (Dr)
Alfred Jabu ak Numpang.*



*Y.B. Encik Dublin Unting ak
Ingkot.*

- 4) Datuk Simon Dembab Maja from Engkilili was the Deputy Chief Minister of Sarawak and Minister for Lands and Mineral Resources from 7.7.1970 to 22.7.1973.
- 5) Tun Datuk Patinggi Haji Ahmad Zaidi Mohamad Nor who was the Council Negri Member from Kalaka was the Minister for Local Government from 9.9.1974 to 23.9.1979. A road in Kuching is named after Tun.
- 6) Y.B. Tan Sri Datuk Amar (Dr) Alfred Jabu ak Numpang who is the Council Negri Member from Layar, Betong is the Deputy Chief Minister from 9.9.1974 until today. He is also the State Minister for Land Development.
- 7) Y.B. Encik Dublin Unting ak Ingkot who is the Council Negri Member from Batang Ai, Lubok Antu is the Assistant Minister for Social Development Sarawak from 2.1.1998 until today.
- 8) Y.B. Encik Peter Nyarok ak Entrie who is the Council Negri Member from Krian Saratok is the State Assistant Minister for Tourism Sarawak from 2.1.1998 until today.
- 9) Y.B. Datuk Peter Tinggom ak Kamarau who is the Member of Parliament from Saratok. He was the Deputy Federal Minister for National Unity and Social Development until 9. 12.1999.



*Y.B. Datuk Peter Tinggom ak.
Kemarau.*



Y.B. Datuk Douglas Uggah Embas.



Y.B. Encik Peter Nyarok ak. Entrie.

- 10) Y.B. Datuk Douglas Uggah Embas who is the Member of Parliament from Betong. He was the Parliamentary Secretary of Ministry for Rural Development until 9. 12. 1999 and he was appointed as the Deputy Federal Minister in the Prime Minister's Department on 11.12.1999.



Y.B. Encik Bolhassan bin Haji Di.



Encik Hollis ak. Tini.

- 11) Y.B. Encik Bolhassan bin Haji Di who is the Member of Council Negri from Beting Maro is the Assistant Minister in the Chief Minister's Office.
- 12) Encik Hollis Tini from Sri Aman was the Assistant Minister for Welfare in the 1980s until March 1987. A road

in Sri Aman is named after him. He passed away on 29.1.1993.

- 13) Datuk Daniel Tajem ak. Miri who was a Member of Council Negri from Bukit Begunan was the Deputy Chief Minister of Sarawak and Minister for Communication and Works from 26.3.81



Datuk Daniel Tajem ak Miri.

to March, 1987. He is now Malaysian High Commissioner in New Zealand.

- 14) Datuk Edmund Langgu ak Saga from Saratok was the Deputy Federal Ministe for Agriculture.
- 15) Tan Sri Datuk Gerunsin Lembat from Saratok was the first Sarawakian appointed as the State Secretary in 1965 and he retired from Sarawak Civil Service in 1979. He passed away in Kuching on 12.12.1995.



Datuk Edmund Langgu ak Saga.



Tan Sri Datuk Gerunsin Lembat.

IX. SRI AMAN BIG FIRE

Since the establishment of Simanggang Bazaar (Sri Aman) in 1864 the bazaar was gutted by fire three times. In 1864 after Fort Alice was built, a group of Chinese Teochews built about 10 units of Attap shophouses along the existing Main Bazaar for petty trading with

the local people there. However, in 1868, Simanggang Bazaar was gutted by a big fire but within the same year, the shopkeepers rebuilt the shophouses. The second big fire occurred on 13.1.1928 in which two rows of 56 wooden

shophouses in the Main Bazaar were completely gutted by fire. After the big fire, Sir Charles Vyner Brooke, the third White Rajah of Sarawak visited the site and he approved the financial grant of \$1,500/- for every shop owner to rebuild the shophouses. All the shophouses were rebuilt at the beginning of 1929.

The third big fire started on 7.2.1983 at about 11.45 p.m. Two rows consisting 20 units of about 50-year old shophouses in the Main Bazaar were gutted by fire. Fortunately, there was no loss of human life in both occasions. Today, all the 3 rows of shophouses facing Batang Lupar River are replaced by 3-storey concrete shophouses.

X TRANSPORTATION IN THE OLDEN DAYS

In the olden days prior to the construction of Kuching/Sri Aman Road, communication between Sri Aman and other areas especially Kuching and Sibul were all by riverine transport. Before the use of engine ships, it took the sailing-wind ships about two weeks from Sri Aman to reach Kuching. After the introduction of steamships, it still took two days and one night to arrive in Kuching.

In 1960 before the completion of Kuching/Sri Aman Road, it took a vehicle about 6 hours to travel along the gravel and muddy road to reach Kuching. After the road was tarred, it takes about three hours to drive from Sri Aman to Kuching.

There was an airstrip about 3 kilometres from Sri Aman Town and it was built in the year



Hoover Hotel - the Highest Building in Sri Aman.



Simanggang Theatre, Sri Aman.

1960. It was used especially before Kuching/Sri Aman Road was accessible to the public and especially during the Indonesia/Malaysia confrontation time. However, with effect from 1979, the air service was stopped due to lack of customers.

XI. Lubok Antu District

1) Lubok Antu in General

Lubok Antu Bazaar is the administrative headquarters of Lubok Antu District which covers an area of 2,338 square kilometres. The district has one sub-district i.e. Engkilili. Based on 1991 census, Lubok Antu had a population of 22,270, the majority of them are the Ibans. The Chinese and the Malays are the minor communities staying around Lubok Antu Bazaar and Engkilili Bazaar. However, based on 1999 Mid-Year Population Estimate, the District had a population of 26,400. Orang Utan is the landmark of Lubok Antu.

2) How did Lubok Antu get its name.

The name "Lubok Antu" derives from a pool just at the side of Fort Arundell, the District Office. In the



*Ghost's
Pool or
Demon's
Pool where
Lubok
Antu got
its name.*



*Orang
Utan - the
Landmark
of Lubok
Antu.*

olden days, people taking bath or swimming in the pool had a feeling that someone at the bottom of the pool was trying to pull them down. They believed it was the work of the invisible power. Slowly, the pool became well-known as the ghostly pool and in local term "Lubok Antu" until today.

There was another legend related by Mr. Peter Goullart in his book "River of the White Lily" in 1965 that Lubok Antu was known as "Demon's Pool". In the olden days, an old and monstrously large crocodile always lurked at the bottom and surfaced only to seize an unwary beast which came out of the jungle for a drink, or a man, unfortunate enough to have his boat overturned at this malignant spot. The local people believed that the crocodile was an evil spirit. The evil spirit which lived in the pool eventually made the place to be known as "Lubok Antu".

3) *Lubok Antu Bazaar*

Lubok Antu Bazaar which was first established in 1872 has 16 old double-storey wooden shophouses, Lubok Antu Council Market and a Chinese Temple along Kapitan Chua Kam Boon Road. Another 6 double-storey concrete shophouses and the bus station are found at the back of the main bazaar along Penghulu Ngali Road. The only hotel in the bazaar is Kelingkang Inn which is housed in the 3-storey concrete building. Altogether there are 23 shophouses in Lubok Antu Bazaar.



*Fort
Arundell,
Lubok
Antu*



*Lubok
Antu
Bazaar.*

Although Lubok Antu is a small bazaar, the river front along Batang Ai has a beautiful landscaping area and children playground. Upon the completion of 83-kilometre Sri Aman/Lubok Antu Road with effect from 17.6.1967, the riverine transport from Engkilili to Lubok Antu Bazaar ceased its activity. The Bazaar from that time onwards is accessible by road.

4) Forts

There are two forts being built by the Brooke Regime in the district. Fort Arundell was constructed in 1912 in Lubok Antu. It was named in honour of the Resident of Simanggang Division (Sri Aman Division), Mr. Gilbert Roger Harris Arundell. He was killed in the Ulu Ai in 1942 when the Japanese attacked Sarawak during World War II. The fort was rebuilt in 1947. Fort Leonora which was built in Engkilili in 1924 was named after the wife of the third White Rajah Sir Charles Vyner Brooke and it was also the name of his eldest daughter. During the colonial days, Fort Leonora was renovated and became the office of Lubok Antu District Council. A new building for Engkilili Sub-District which carried the name of Fort Leonora was built a little further away from the "old fort" on a small hill top. Now it is being used as Sub-district Office, Engkilili.



*New Fort
Leonora,
Engkilili.*

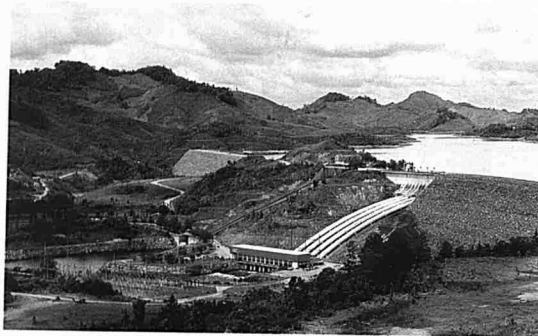
An oil palm mill was constructed along Lubok Antu Road and the crude palm oil is exported to Singapore, Bangladesh, India and European countries. The oil palm projects have provided many job opportunities for the local people in the district. One oil palm processing factory was built at Jalan Ridan/Lubok Antu at the cost of RM16.6 million and it was declared open by YAB the Chief Minister, Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr.) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud on 5.5.1985.

5) Oil Palm Plantation

A total of 8,255 hectares of oil palm plantations thrive in the vicinity of the Batang Ai hydro-electric power station and the surrounding areas.

6) Batang Ai Hydro-electric Power Station

Sarawak's first hydro-electric power station is located at Batang Ai in Lubok Antu district. Built at a cost of RM560 million, the plant generates 108 MW power and 614 GWh of



The Batang Ai Hydropower Station supplies electricity to Kuching and its surrounding areas. It is operated by SESCO and it generates 108MW and 614GWB energy per annum.

energy a year. The power station was officially declared open by the Prime Minister of Malaysia, YAB Dato Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad on 21.8.1985.

There are altogether four dams namely Main Dam, Lima Saddle Dam, Bekatan Saddle Dam and Sebangki Saddle Dam which make up Batang Ai Station. It is managed by the Sarawak Electricity Supply Corporation (SESCO). In 1977, feasibility studies for the project were first conducted. Five years later the Batang Ai river was diverted. In April

1985, the first unit came into service and in September 1985, the last fourth unit was completed for operation.

XII EARLY CHINESE SETTLEMENT IN ENKILILI

Engkilili is a sub-district of Lubok Antu and based on 1991 Census, it had a population of 12,561. Engkilili Bazaar was first established in 1888. In 1920, there were 3 Attap shophouses and then it was increased up to 12 shophouses. However, on 3.3.1930, 8 of the Attap shophouses were gutted by fire. Today, Engkilili has about 80

Engkilili Bazaar.



shophouses of which 49 of them are old wooden shophouses which were built from 1917 onwards. Engkilili derived its name from a local fruit which were plenty around Engkilili area in the olden days. Lubok Antu District Council has made an effort to plant some Engkilili trees in the park area near District Office, Engkilili. The fruits are red in colour, sweet but with a bit of sour taste. In 1854, Chinese Hakka immigrants led by Bong Chie came from Pontianak and Sambas in Kalimantan Indonesia to Engkilili through Tebedu in Serian. The Hoppo Hakka numbering about 300-500 were attracted to Marup because of the gold deposit there. They came to Marup to work in the gold mine but some of them became padi and vegetable farmers. In 1917, Chinese Teochews began to settle down in Engkilili and most of them were traders staying in Engkilili Bazaar.

Based on the Sarawak Gazette of September 1870, there were about 450 Chinese settled down at Marup, Engkilili. At that time, Marup was one of the best known



Engkilili Fruit.

gold fields in Sarawak and it yielded the highest quality gold ore. Hence, the Chinese formed the Fifteen Kongsi at Marup to run their daily administration. Today, most of the Chinese Hakka in Engkilili including the old headman Bong Nam Siong, aged 91, were the descendants of the Fifteen Kongsi Chinese. Today, gold ore deposit still occurs at Subang in the Marup Valley and the Sungai Sleh area is identified as a promising gold ore deposit area.

XIII. BETONG DISTRICT (SARIBAS)

1) Betong in General

Betong is the administrative headquarters of Saribas District. The district takes its name from the

Saribas River which flows from its source at Bukit Sadok whereas the town derives its name from a kind of big bamboo locally known as "Buluh Betong" and its scientific name is *Dendrocalamus asper*. In the olden days, there were plenty of Buluh Betong widely grown in the vicinity of Betong area. Saribas District has an area of 1,776 square kilometres.



Fort Lily,
Betong.



Rubber -
the symbol
of Betong.

Saribas district has three sub-districts namely Spaoh, Pusa and Debak. Pusa Bazaar is 72 kilometres by road from Betong whereas Debak Bazaar is 53 kilometres by road from the district headquarters. Spaoh Bazaar is 46 kilometres by road to Betong. According to 1991 Census, Spaoh sub-district had a population of 11,218, Pusa had a population of 11,559 whereas Debak had a population of 8,647. Spaoh Bazaar which was first built in 1920s consists of 32 double-storey wooden shophouses, Pusa Bazaar which was first established in 1864 has 24 new concrete double-storey shophouses in the new township whereas Debak Bazaar which was first sited in 1860s contains 55 concrete double-storey shophouses. Based on 1991 Census, Saribas District had a population of

44,979, the majority of them are the Ibans followed by the Malays and the Chinese. In 1999, according to the Mid-Year Population Estimate, the population of the District had increased up to 52,200.

2) Historical Background

The history of the district is colourful with stories of Anti-Rajah Movement, fortresses and river battles during 1840s and 1860s. The local heroes who were deadly against the White Rajah's rule were Rentap, O.K.P. Dana Bayang and his sons, Saji, Nanang, Luyoh and Buda as well as Linggir of Paku.

Betong Bazaar was first established along Batang Saribas in 1890s and it consisted of 16 Attap shophouses. In 1915, Betong Bazaar was gutted by fire but later on it was rebuilt for business. However, in 1925, another big fire destroyed the whole bazaar. In 1927, 11 units of double-storey wooden shophouses were constructed and before the second World War in 1941, another 30 double-storey wooden shophouses were completed in Betong. The first Chinese school known as Chung San Primary School was built in 1925. Today there are 96 shophouses in the town. At the beginning of 20th century, Saribas district started to cultivate cash crops such as coffee

and rubber. Betong was also the centre where the Iban began to accept Christianity and modern education through schooling provided by the Anglican missionary.

There is a fort called Fort Lily in Betong. It was named after the third name of the wife of Rajah Charles Brooke. It was built in 1855 by the Brooke Regime. The building was first built with Nipah roof but later it was replaced by Belian shingles. This fort was built to check the movements of Saji and his followers from Ulu Layar to attack other people staying down river. Saji was an Iban hero from Padeh River and he did not like foreigners to rule over the Iban community. He frequently challenged the Brooke's authority and many a time he even boasted that he would take Charles Brooke's head. In April 1858, an expedition had been sent against him by the Brooke's authority but the hero managed to escape. He successfully attacked and destroyed Betong Fort in July 1858. However, Saji was killed near Kuala Langkit by the Brooke's force. Later, Fort Lily was used as a fortress to defend against attacks by the Iban Hero Rentap and their followers from Bukit Sadok. The fort was for many years in the past used as government offices.

3) *Legend of Dayang Isah in Pusa*

Pusa is one of the three sub-districts of Saribas. Located at Batang Rimbas, Pusa seems to have a long historical record besides Sarawak River Delta. In local Malay dialect, "Pusa" means "cat". However, there is another version which suggested that "Pusa" actually derives from the word "Pusat" because in the olden days, Pusa was the "Pusat" (centre) of settlement in the area.

On 30.7.1997, the then Minister for Social Development, YB. Dato Haji Adenan Haji Satem declared open the renovation of three old tombs belonging to the following persons in Kampung Kaloh, Pusa:-

- a) Allahyarham Dato Godam Ibnu Bendahara Harun;
- b) Pengiran Temenggong Pengiran Abdul Kadir Ibnu Pengiran Sidewa Maharaja; and
- c) Dayang Isah Tandang Sari binti Pengiran Abdul Kadir.

During the opening ceremony, YB. Dato Haji Adenan Haji Satem announced that the three tombs had been declared as a historical site by the State Government of Sarawak. The three ancestral graves dated back to the 17th century. Dato Godam was a Minangkabau royalty from Sumatra while Pengiran Temenggong



The headstone of the grave of Dayang Isah Tandang Sari.

Pengiran Abdul Kadir was a member of the Brunei royal family.

With the restoration of the graves, the people of Pusa become the proud custodians of the historical cemetery. According to Penghulu Haji Eki bin Haji Daud of Pusa, Dayang Isah is their own Mahsuri who was born in Pusa. He said, "She was so beautiful that many people fell in love with her". The story of Dayang Isah was confirmed by the Head of Brunei Historical Centre, Pehin Jawatan Dalam Seri Maharaja Dato Seri

Utama Dr. Haji Awang Mohd Jamil Sifri during the "Majlis Tahlil" ceremony at the grave sites in 1997. He said, "Dayang Isah Tandang Sari binti Pengiran Temenggong Pengiran Abdul Kadir was incredible beautiful and her beauty attracted many men. Although she was married to a strong and likeable man, she was being followed around even when she was accompanied by her husband. Soon her husband became very jealous and Dayang Isah who became depressed took her own life by strangling herself with seven threads consisting of seven colours".

Pengiran Temenggong Pengiran Abdul Kadir came to Pusa after his other daughter Dayang Che' was made the third wife of Sultan Nasruddin of Brunei (1690-1710 A.D.). In Pusa, he met Dato Godam and he promised Dato Godam to marry that daughter. Dato Godam went to Brunei bringing a brass cannon. Being a brave and clever man who helped the Sultan to solve a lot of internal problems, the wish of Dato Godam to marry



*Betong
Town
Square.*



*District
Office,
Betong.*

Dayang Che', the daughter of Pengiran Temenggong Pengiran Abdul Kadir was granted. He brought Dayang Che' to Pusa where the couple had two children, Menteri Uban and Menteri Puteh. After sometime, Dato Godam took Menteri Uban to Minangkabau where the son became Bendahara in place of Dato Godam's father,

Bendahara Harun. His second son was brought over to Brunei where he served the country as his grandfather before him. Dato Godam returned to Pusa where he spent his life until his death.

4) *Integrated Agriculture Project*

In order to raise the standard of rural people, Integrated Agriculture Station Layar was established near Ulu Layar Road junction about 21 kilometres from Betong Town. Land acquisition started in 1990 and development works started in 1991. The station which has an area of 290 hectares emphasized on the integrated approach for crops, livestock and fisheries developments. The facilities in the station are developed to cater for training production and research work.

5) *Betong Today*

Bukit Saban Resort was built along Paku River near Betong Town on 18.9.1995. The whole project costed nearly RM5 million. Bukit Saban Resort which promotes culture, adventure and nature provides 50 fully air-conditioned rooms for tourists and local people to stay. It offers longhouse visits,

nature treks and trips to local farms and plantations. Betong new District Office costing RM2.4 million was constructed on 12.10.1990 to replace the government offices housed at Fort Lily. Today more concrete shophouses, Council market, District Hospital, Government Technical Secondary School and other new government buildings are built in Betong Town. On 18.3.1995, the RM2.5 million mini-stadium was declared open in Betong. Within the same year, Rentap Community Hall costing RM2.1 million was also completed for public use. On 11.1.1999 at about 1.00 p.m., a row of five wooden shophouses in Betong Town was razed by fire. The loss was estimated in the region of RM1.75 million and 58 people were made homeless.

Based on a survey carried out in February, 1999, Betong Town had 96 shophouses. The details are as follows:-

<i>Type of shophouses</i>	<i>No. of units</i>
1) Double-storey wooden shophouses	53
2) Double-storey concrete shophouses	5
3) Double-storey new concrete shophouses along Jalan Lee Kai Teng	32
4) Three-storey concrete shophouses	6
5) 5 units of double-storey wooden shophouses burnt down on 11.1.1999	-
Total:	----- 96

There is one cinema, Loxing Theatre, four small medium-size hotels, 2 commercial banks, Council Wet Market and Council Multipurpose Market to provide a venue for hawkers to do business in the town. A new Betong Crystal Commercial Centre is under planning and it is sited along Jalan Montegrai and Jalan Sie Meng Chiaw. Sarawak Economic Development Corporation (SEDC) is also planning to build 24 units of shophouses in Betong Town. When it is materialised, there will be an additional of 62 units of shophouses in Betong Town.

The symbol of Betong Town is Rubber Tree. This is because Saribas District was one of the first districts in Sarawak being planted with rubber trees in the early 20th Century and rubber gardens are still very common in Saribas area.

XIV. SARATOK DISTRICT (KALAKA)

1) *Saratok in General*

Saratok is the administrative headquarters of Kalaka District which covers an area of 1,687 square kilometres. The district has three sub-districts namely Roban, Nanga Budu and Kabong. Both Roban Bazaar and Kabong Bazaar were established in 1900s. Roban Bazaar which is 21 kilometres by



*The
Landmark of
Saratok - Oil
Palm Fruit.*

road from Saratok has 45 double-storey concrete shophouses and 6 three-storey concrete shophouses whereas Kabong Bazaar is 59 kilometres by road from Saratok and it has 20 double-storey wooden shophouses. Nanga Budu which is 28 kilometres by road from Saratok has a village shop only. 1991 Census showed that Roban sub-district had a population of 6,728, Kabong sub-district had a population of 10,090 whereas Nanga Budu sub-district had a population of 3,038. Based on 1991 census, Kalaka District had a population of 37,198, the majority of them are the Ibans followed by the Malays and the Chinese.

However, according to 1999 Mid-Year Population Estimate, the population of the district was 44,800. The symbol of Kalaka District is oil palm fruit because SALCRA has planted big oil palm estates in the district.

2) *The Origin of the Name of Saratok*

How did Saratok get her name? There was a story related by the locals that in the olden days, one old Malay Dato and his guide who wanted to visit their relatives staying somewhere in the area of present Saratok Town. Due to his old age, the Dato always walked to the wrong direction. His guide kept saying, "Salah Tok" (it means its wrong, Dato). Later on, the local people called the place "Salah Tok" and slowly it was pronounced as "Saratok" until today.

There was another version which revealed that the name of Saratok was actually derived from a local fruit called "Salak". In the olden days, the



A section of Saratok Town.



District Office, Saratok.

place where present Saratok Town is situated was full of Salak fruits. Everybody who visited the place would say, "Salak Tu" which literally means "that is Salak fruit". Slowly "Salak Tu" was pronounced as "Saratok" until today.

3) *Historical Background*

Kalaka was a rural district and based on 1871 Census it had a population of 9,530. The majority of the people were the Malays (2,724), the Ibans (6,741), Chinese (62) and Indians (3).

Fort Charles at Kabong was first built by the Brooke's officer Mr. Maxwell in 1878 to discharge administrative matters and to collect taxes from the people in the district. It was collapsed in 1893 due to soil erosion and it was rebuilt further inland in 1895. Ten years after Fort Charles was built, Fort Ranee at Saratok was built in 1888. It was originally a temporary building with Attap roofing and round timber. Now it is used as the District Office. In Saratok Bazaar, rows of wooden shophouses along Batang Krian were first built by the Chinese Hokkien in early 1900s. The Chinese Min Syn Primary School was constructed in 1919 when more Chinese were settling down in Saratok.

Around 1888 there were Ibans found settling along Krian River and Seblak River, Malays at Kabong and Sessang whereas the Chinese at Saratok, Kabong and Roban Bazaars. Their main activities were



*Fort Charles,
Kabong.*

planting padi, fishing and sago planting. In 1900, rubber planting which was brought into the Saribas District was spread over to Krian River.

In 1976, Datuk Amar Dunstan Endawie Enchana from Krian Saratok was appointed as the Deputy Chief Minister of Sarawak and Datuk Edmund Langgu ak Saga also from Saratok was appointed as the Deputy Federal Minister for Agriculture in Kuala Lumpur. In 1965, Tan Sri Datuk Gerusin Lembat from Kalaka District was appointed as the first State Secretary of Sarawak. In 1979 when Tan Sri Datuk Gerusin Lembat retired, Abang Yusuf Puteh also from the district took over the post of State Secretary until he retired in 1984.

*Telaga Mok
Haji Kiah at
the foot of
District
Office,
Saratok.*



There are two historical sites in Saratok. One old well popularly known as Telaga Mok Haji Kiah is located at the foot of District Office, Saratok. The well never runs dry even during dry weather. The site of Temenggong Tandok's longhouse at Krian Tengah was burned down in 1833 by the Ibans from Banting, Lingga led by Ijau Lang. At that time, Saratok was still under the rule of Sultan of Brunei. Perhaps one day the authority concerned may declare both Telaga Mok

Haji Kiah and Temenggong Tandok's Longhouse as historical sites in Sarawak.

4) Saratok Town

Saratok Town was gutted by fire in June 1970. Half of 56 units of wooden shophouses on stilt were burnt down. On 10.5.1972, the construction of Saratok concrete shophouses commenced. In October 1973, 61 concrete shophouses were constructed at the land just adjacent to the old Town. In 1981, ten more concrete shophouses were constructed, a new District Mosque costing RM316,000.00 and a new grand Chinese Temple were also completed. St. Peter's Church built in the late 1930s was replaced by a new concrete church in 1969. The sites of Saratok old town along Jalan Ong Ho San are being used for the construction of new Min Syn Primary



*Old Saratok
Town before it
was burned
down in June,
1970.*

School, new District Community Hall, new Council Market and Saratok Bus Station. There are four secondary schools in the district, two in Saratok, one in Roban and one in Kabong. Besides there are two commercial banks and 10 small medium size hotels in the town.

Based on a survey conducted in February 1999, Saratok Town has 121 units of shophouses. The details are as follows:-

<i>Type of shophouses</i>	<i>No. of units</i>
1) Double- storey concrete shophouses in Saratok Town Proper built in 1973	61
2) Double- storey concrete shophouses along Jalan Ong Chui Seng	20
3) Double- storey concrete shophouses along Jalan Tarang	9
4) Double-storey concrete shophouses along Jalan Wee Geok Eng/Jalan Lim Ah Hei	22
5) Three- storey concrete shophouses (2 blocks) along Jalan Saratok	9

Total:	121

XV. SRI AMAN TODAY

According to 1991 Census, Sri Aman District had a population of 60,085. However, in 1999 Mid-Year Population Estimate, it had increased to 66,200. The district has an area of 3,846 square

kilometres. Although the Town of Peace is being by-passed by 9 kilometres at 181th kilometre Kuching/Sibu Highway, the pace of development is steady. There are three sub-districts namely Meludam, Lingga and Pantu in Sri Aman District. 1991 Census showed that Meludam sub-district had a population of 5,122, Lingga sub-district had a population of 3,099 whereas Pantu sub-district had a population of 8,439. Meludam Bazaar which was established in 1924 consists of 15 wooden shophouses on stilts and Lingga Bazaar which was built in 1849 has 22 wooden shophouses on stilts. Pantu which became a sub-district in 1975 has a row of 18 shophouses in Pantu Bazaar which was first constructed in 1910.

In 1967 when the author was first posted to Sri Aman District (it was then known as Simanggang) as a Sarawak Administrative Officer (SAO), Kuching/Simanggang Road was still a gravel and dusty road. It took more than four hours from Kuching to Simanggang by road. There were about 100 shophouses in this rural town. There were four rows of wooden shophouses along the Main Bazaar, three rows of concrete shophouses along the Kapitan Road and two rows of newly completed concrete shophouses along the Club Road with Simanggang Theatre at the end of the road. The old wooden State Government Office along Jalan Istana was used to accommodate R&DO, Treasury and Land and Surveys Department. The old Kubu Alice

was still used by other government agencies on the first floor and Divisional Prison on the ground floor.

In 1999, the number of shophouses in the town has increased more than two folds. The old shophouses and the burnt-down shophouses are being replaced by new concrete shophouses. The town extension is towards the Club Road, Hospital Road, Paya Road, Durian Road, Brayun Road and Sabu Road. Based on the survey conducted in February 1999, Bandar Sri Aman has a total of 265 units of shophouses. However, the industrialised shops along Kuching/Sri Aman Road and Sabu Road are not included in the survey. The details of the survey are as follows:-

<i>Type of shophouses</i>	<i>No. of units</i>
1) Double-storey concrete shophouses	115
2) Old wooden shophouse	1
3) Three-storey concrete shophouse	129
4) Four-storey concrete shophouse	17
5) Five-storey concrete shophouse	3

Total:	265

The new magnificent Resident's Office was constructed a few years ago to replace the old R&DO/Treasury/Land & Survey Department building. Fort Alice remains

lonely now because all the government agencies and Divisional Prison have moved out to their own respective buildings along Jalan Abang Aing and Sabu Road. Perhaps one day the old fort could be turned into a Divisional Museum. Besides, there are numerous hawker stalls and lock-up shops being built in the town centre especially along Hospital Road to assist the Bumiputras in their small business.

In the 1960s there was only one bank i.e. The Standard Chartered Bank and there were only one small hotel i.e. Simanggang Hotel and one big hotel i.e. Hoover Hotel. However, today Sri Aman has seven banking companies and seven big and small hotels around the town to provide facilities not only to the local people but also visitors and tourists to the Town of Peace. In 1993, Tze Hun Kok Chinese Temple was rebuilt at the cost of RM1 million. It was declared open by the then Minister of Finance and Infrastructure Development Datuk Dr. George Chan on 31.1.1993.

The newly completed 54-kilometre Sri Aman/Lingga Road which was opened to traffic in June 1998 certainly provides easier access to the people in Entulang, Stumbin, Tanjung Bijat and Lingga areas to come over to Sri Aman by road and this obviously increases the influx of people to the town. The areas along the road are well known to have fertile soil and will be developed for commercial agricultural purposes. This is

also part of the overall plan to develop Sri Aman as an economic centre and the development of the hinterlands will certainly contribute the faster growth of Sri Aman Division. 300,000 hectares of Native Customary Right land in Undup and Bukit Begunan with an investment of RM600 million have been approved for implementation in stages with effect from the year 2000. By then, this oil palm schemes will benefit 30 longhouses in Undup and 50 longhouses in Bukit Begunan areas.

A new town square costing RM2 million will be built at an area covering 7 hectares of the land near the town's Civic Centre. It will be in the shape of a large Terabai (Iban Warrior's Shield) with four roundabouts at each corner and a big one encircling the sides. The town square will also include the completion of a landscaping project, a water fountain and recreational facilities. Upon completion, it will act as an important catalyst to spur the economic growth of this once-sleepy town. Work on the 625-metre long Sri Aman riverfront project began in June 1999. The

RM800,000.00 project would be completed within the next eight years. Upon completion, it would further beautify the waterfront and esplanade project which is to be implemented between Simanggang River and Fort Alice along the Batang Lupar.

In spite of the fact that the physical development of the town and its surrounding is slow, it is definitely steady and it meets the basic requirement of the people in this rural town. The town has not only expanded more than two folds for the past three decades but also new government buildings, RM2.9 million Sri Aman Civic Centre, new divisional mosque, new outdoor stadium at the site of the old airport, new magnificent MDSA library are also being built in the town centre. The establishment of industrialised areas along Sri Aman/Kuching Road and many housing estates such as Kampung Muhibbah, Taman Azba, Taman Norita, Taman Siang, Sri Jaya Lowcost Housing, Taman Vistago, etc have actually helped to make Sri Aman a bigger town as well as a better, more comfortable and more peaceful place to stay in.

CHAPTER 8

SARIKEI DIVISION

Map of Sarikei Division



Sarikei - The Town of Pineapples

I. INTRODUCTION

Sarikei Division, the Sixth Division of Sarawak, has an area of 6,969 square kilometres and based on 1991 Census, it had a population of 127,537. However, according to 1999 Mid-Year Population Estimate, Sarikei Division had a population of 151,300. The majority of the people are Chinese, Ibans, Melanau and Malays. About 65% of the land in Sarikei Division is not suitable for agricultural purposes, about 18% of the land is suitable for agricultural activities (Class 2 and Class 3) and the other 17% of the land is marginal suitable. However, large scale of commercial farming of cash crops particularly padi, commercial livestock rearings and poultry farmings are being encouraged. Sarikei Division can also become a major producer of animal feeds since

maize, soya beans and tapioca grow very well on Sarikei soil.

Historically, Sarikei was part and parcel of Brunei Territory until 1853. It became part of Sarawak Territory when the Sultan of Brunei Abdul Mumin ceded the Lower Rajang Basin to the White Rajah of Sarawak Sir James Brooke in 1853. In July, 1929 Sarikei became a district headquarters of Lower Rajang Basin. Prior to 1.4.1973, Sarikei Division was part of the Third Division with Divisional Headquarters at Sibul. In order to facilitate more effective administration and to implement more developments in the area, the State Government approved Sarikei to become a division. Now it has five districts and three sub-districts namely:-

<i>District</i>	<i>Sub-district</i>	<i>Population in 1991</i>
1) Sarikei	Belawai	49,407
2) Meradong (Bintangor)		26,972
3) Daro		13,441
4) Julau	Pakan	28,213
5) Matu	Igan	9,504
Total:		127,537



*Aerial view
of Sarikei
Town.*

Sarikei Division has two towns and fourteen bazaars in the whole division namely:-

- 1) Sarikei Town
- 2) Bintangor (Binatang) Town
- 3) Belawai Bazaar
- 4) Rajang Bazaar
- 5) Jakar Bazaar
- 6) Pakan Bazaar
- 7) Julau Bazaar
- 8) Daro Bazaar
- 9) Matu Bazaar
- 10) Kuala Matu Bazaar
- 11) Selalang Bazaar
- 12) Igan Bazaar
- 13) Nanga Wak

- 14) Meluan
- 15) Gunung Ayer Bazaar
- 16) Paloh Bazaar

II. THE ORIGIN OF THE NAME OF SARIKEI

(1) Version 1

An old story revealed that in the olden days there was no name being given to Sarikei Town. The whole area was known as Lower Rajang Basin. In 1853 after Sir James Brooke took over the control of Lower Rajang Basin from the Sultan of Brunei, he sent

his official to visit places along Batang Rajang. A Malay driver was sending the Brooke's official to the area using a longboat. Upon arriving at the present site of Sarikei Town, the official asked in English, "What is the name of the place?" The Malay driver not knowing any English language, did not answer but shook his head only. The official got angry and scolded the Malay driver "Silly guide!". Then the Malay driver thinking the official was naming the place as "Silly guide" answered, "Ya, silly guide". Then the Brooke's official named the place "Silly guide" which eventually pronounced as "Sarikei" until today.

(2) Version 2

Another story related that the Chinese Cantonese who first migrated to Lower Rajang Basin area in the early 20th century settled around the area called Sari. They were farmers and many of them reared chickens for sale in the market. The Cantonese pronounced chicken as "Kei" in their own dialect. Whenever they sold the chicken, people would enquire where were these chickens from. The Cantonese answered "Sari Kei" - the chicken from Sari. Eventually, the people in the area called the place "Sarikei".



*Pineapple -
the symbol
of Sarikei.*

III. SETTLEMENTS IN SARIKEI

Sometime in 1854, a group of Chinese Hokkien came from China and settled down in Rajang District (Sarikei). They built Attap houses, planted vegetables and reared chickens. Four wooden shophouses with Attap roof were first built by the Chinese Hokkien along Batang Rajang for petty trading. Later on, two more wooden shophouses were constructed and followed by another row of 8 shophouses were being built too. On 4.1.1856 Julau Dayaks came to Sarikei and burned down the Bazaar. Subsequently, the Bazaar was rebuilt. By the year 1927, 36 wooden shophouses and one cinema were built in Sarikei Bazaar already.

From 1902 to 1917, there were about 1,000 Cantonese immigrants being brought over to Sibü by Then Kung Suk, the Cantonese pioneer in Rajang Basin. Some Cantonese migrated to Sarikei to start pepper planting. When the Foochow immigrants led by Wong Ching Poh moved from Sibü to Sarikei in 1910, they were permitted by the Malay Tua Kampung Haji Omar to start farming on the eastern bank of the Nyelong River and another settlement was established at the Sungai Sarikei in 1914. They cleared the forest, built Attap houses and planted vegetables as well as fruit trees on the land they cleared. In 1914, the Rajah Brooke Government permitted the Foochow settlers to migrate to Sarikei and Repok areas. From that time onwards, groups of Foochow came down from Sibü and started rubber planting and pepper planting. In 1927, due to the increase of the Chinese population in Sarikei, a Chinese primary school known as Kwong Chiaw Primary School was built to cater the Chinese children for primary education. In 1926, Foochow settlement extended to Jakar and by 1932, the surrounding areas of Sarikei, Repok and Jakar were populated by Foochow settlers. On 20.5.1972, the Kwong Lee Bank, Sarikei commenced its business in the town. On 15.10.1972, Sarikei Foochow Association was formed to look after the welfare and interest of the Foochow people.

IV. HERO OF SARIKEI - SHERIP MASAHOR (1810-1890)

The most outstanding hero from Sarikei Division was none other than Sherip Masahor who spent the whole of his adult life struggling against the British who attempted to settle down in and ruled over Sarawak.



Sherip Masahor.

Sherip Masahor who was born in Brunei about the year 1810 migrated to Igan when he was still a young man and, later on, he moved to Rajang District where he settled down there. He was not only friendly to the local Malays and the Melanau but also the Ibans along Batang Rajang areas. Sherip Masahor became so influential and powerful among the locals that he took over the administration of the Rajang District from Datu Abdul Rahman, the Sultan's representative from Brunei. He seized the power first and asked for the Sultan's permission later. The Sultan of Brunei had no choice but to appoint Sherip Masahor as the Governor of Rajang District.

In 1853 Sultan Abdul Mumin of Brunei ceded the Lower Rajang Basin to the White Rajah of Sarawak, Sir James Brooke. The White Rajah retained Sherip Masahor in his

position but Sherip Masahor paid little attention and continued to act in the semi-independent manner as usual. In actual fact, Sherip Masahor was deadly against Rajah James Brooke to rule over Sarawak. When Sir James Brooke began to swallow up more territories of the Sultanate of Brunei, he together with Datu Patinggi Gapur planned to attack Kuching but they failed. Datu Patinggi Gapur was sent to Mecca for pilgrimage whereas Sherip Masahor returned home in Sarikei.

In 1855 when Sherip Masahor intervened in a dispute between Pengiran Ersat and Pengiran Matusin at Mukah, he was fined by the second White Rajah Sir Charles Brooke. After several abortive attempts to get rid of the Brooke Rule, Sherip Masahor was banished to Singapore on 1.7.1861. He lived in Singapore for the rest of his life. He was given a small pension by the Sarawak Government and he supplemented it by building boats for sale. Sherip Masahor died in Singapore in February, 1890 still full of plans and hope to push the Europeans out of his beloved Sarawak.

Sherip Masahor was declared as a hero by the State Government of Sarawak on 27.7.1993. His relief figure was inserted on a plaque around the base of the column of Heroes' Monument at Sarawak Museum Garden, Kuching. A road between Tun Jugah Road and Rock Road in Kuching and another road in Sarikei are named after this great man.



District Office Cum Community Hall, Matu.



Matu/Daro District Council Building under construction.

V. MATU DISTRICT

1) *Matu in General*

Formerly, Matu was a sub-district of Daro. On 5.5.1991, Matu was upgraded as a full district and incorporated in the Sarikei Division. Matu is the 28th district and the last district of Sarawak. It covers an area of 680 square kilometres. In 1940, it was estimated that the population in Matu was in the region of 3,000.

Based on 1991 Census, Matu had a population of 9,504, the majority of them are the Melanaus, followed by the Ibans, Chinese and Malays. However, in 1999, according to the Mid-Year Population Estimate, Matu District had a population of 11,400. Igan is the only sub-district of Matu and it had a population of 2,268 based on 1991 Census.

2) How did Matu and Igan get their names

According to Tuan Haji Dawi, aged 90, of Kampung Jemoreng, the name "Matu" is a Malay word. In Melanau dialect, it is pronounced as "Matau". Matau is a local tree which has a lot of flowers but it does not bear fruit. Since the area was full of Matau trees, it was called "Matau" or "Matu" until today. Sungai Matau is flowing at the side of Kampung Sok, not far from Matu Bazaar. "Igan" derived her name from a kind of local fish called "Igan" which were found in the area.

3) Historical Background

In the 1600s, Pangeran Salleh and his father, Pangeran Ishak came from Brunei to Matu for general trading. Pangeran Salleh married with a local Melanau lady and settled down at Kampung Sekaan. It was Pangeran Salleh who first brought the Islam over to Matu more than 300 years ago. Today, most of the Melanaus in Matu district are Muslims while some are converted into Christianity and a handful of them still remain pagans.



Matu Bazaar

4) Matu Bazaar

Matu Bazaar is the administrative headquarters of Matu District. The Bazaar was first established by a group of Chinese Hokkien at the opposite bank of the present Matu Bazaar in 1885. They came direct from China and traded with the Melanaus especially on sago products. However, in 1897, the whole Bazaar was gutted by fire and the shopkeepers suffered a big loss. The shopkeepers rebuilt their shophouses within the same year. After 30 years, Matu Bazaar was gutted by the fire for a second time in 1927.

In 1929, the new Matu Bazaar was built at the present site and the old bazaar site was used for residential purposes. A bridge was constructed across Jemoreng River in order to connect the bazaar area and the

residential areas. Today, there are 17 wooden shophouses on stilt and one Chinese Temple at Matu Bazaar. The Bazaar is both accessible by land and by river.

5) *Matu Kampung and Agriculture Produce*

The whole district has 19 Kampung and longhouses namely Kampung Tian, Jemoreng, Sekaan Besar, Sekaan Kecil, Kuala Matu, Beruan Mapal, Beruan Besar, Sok, Skim Lobak Balu, Kampung Lobak Balu, Bertong, Pergau, Patau Baru, Patau Lama, Berjaya, Bawang, Alot, Tanjung Jol, Rumah Gangge dan Rumah Edi. Of all the Kampung, Kampung Sok which is the only Melanau traditional longhouse is the most famous. It consists of 26 doors, and it was built in 1885 during the time of disorder and chaos. The longhouse is being declared as one of the historical buildings in Sarawak.

Matu District has planted 585 hectares of wet padi and 150 hectares of coconut trees. In 1997 based on Matu Agriculture Report, it has planted 1,240 hectares of sago palms and 248 hectares of oil palm under FELCRA Gugusan Matu.

6) *Matu Development*

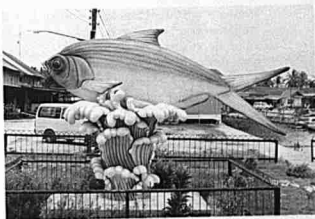
After being upgraded as a full district in 1991 the

development of Matu district gathered greater momentum. The construction of 24-kilometre road from Matu to Daro was completed in 1992 and 44-kilometre Matu/Igan road costing RM60 million was constructed in 1997. The new District Office cum Dewan Masyarakat costing RM5 million was built in February 1997. The construction of Matu/Daro District Council Building was completed in 1999. Besides, there are other government agencies and secondary schools being established in the district to provide the basic needs to the locals.

VI. DARO DISTRICT

1) *Daro in General and Origin of the Name of Daro*

Daro was also a sub-district before but on 2.4.1973, it was upgraded to a full district. Now it is a district



The Landmark of Daro - Ikan Terubok.

under Sarikei Division. "Daro" is a Malay word. In Melanau dialect, it is pronounced as "Daru". In the olden days, there were many stagnant pools in the low-lying areas in Daro. Hence, "Daru" which meant "stagnant pool" was named after the place. Slowly, it was pronounced as "Daro" until today.



Daro Bazaar.

Daro Bazaar is the administrative headquarters of the district. Daro District covers an area of 861 square kilometres and based on 1991 Census, the population of Daro District was 13,441. However, in 1999, according to the Mid-Year Population Estimate, the population of Daro District had increased up to 16,100. The majority of the population are Melanau with the Chinese staying around Daro Bazaar and the Ibans staying at the countryside.



Chinese Temple, Daro.

2) *Daro Bazaar*

According to an oral tradition, Chinese Hokkien came to Daro for petty trading sometime in the 1890s. At first, they built a row of wooden shophouses with Attap roof along Sungai Daro. The Chinese Tuapekong Temple which they built

still exists at the side of the Bazaar facing Sungai Daro. Today, there are 3 rows of 18 wooden shophouses, 2 concrete shophouses and one hotel with 10 units of small shoplots in Daro Bazaar. There is one small bank operated by Bank Pertanian Malaysia at the Bazaar. The landmark of Daro District is Ikan Terubok because there are plenty of such fish along the coastal area of Daro and Kuala Daro as well.

Besides, there are crabs which are not only plentiful but cheap in the Daro Market.

3) *Communication in Daro*

Daro is accessible both by river and by land. It takes an hour by speedboat from Sarikei to reach Daro Bazaar and regular express boats are plying Sarikei/Daro and the nearby areas daily. Daro is connected by road to Matu, Igan, Oya and Mukah. The distance from Daro to Matu is 24 kilometres.

4) *Agriculture Produce*

The Melanau in Daro cultivate sago, coconut and padi while some of them are fishermen. Based on Agriculture Statistics for the year 1997, Daro District has planted 1,386 hectares of sago and 248 hectares of oil palms. The district has also planted 148 hectares of coconut trees producing 1,776,000 coconuts and 958 hectares of wet padi in the same year.

5) *Daro Development*

After being upgraded as a district, the government agencies such as R&DO Office, Police Station, Council Office, Agriculture Office are fully established. District Office Daro costing RM590,700/- was declared open by Assistant Minister of Infrastructure Development and Communication, Y. B. Datuk Abdul Wahab Haji Dolah on 21.10.1999. A

new secondary school known as SMK Toh Puan Datin Patinggi Hajjah Normah costing RM6.25 million was completed on 26.8.1984. An integrated sport complex is to be built at Kilometre Five along Daro/Matu Road. At the moment, the site has been filled with sand.

VII. JULAU DISTRICT

1) *Julau in General*

Formerly, Julau was a sub-district of Kanowit. On 2.4.1973, Julau was upgraded to a full district and incorporated within the Sarikei Division.



Burung Kroyalang and Burial Post - The symbol of Julau.

Julau Bazaar is the administrative headquarters of the district and Pakan is the only sub-district which had a population of 12,913 based on 1991 Census. There are 20 shophouses in Pakan Bazaar and 9 new shophouses are still under construction in June 1999. In the olden days, there were many Pakan durian trees in Pakan area. That is why the place is named after the name of the durian tree called Pakan. Julau District encompasses an area of 2,628 square kilometres and based on 1991 Census, it had a population of 28,213, the majority of the people are the Ibans, followed by the Chinese and some Malays. The Ibans are mostly farmers with shifting cultivation as their main occupation but many of them venture into pepper, rubber and cocoa plantations as their main cash crops. The Chinese confine themselves at the bazaar



*Julau
Main
Bazaar.*



*New
memorial
tomb of
Rentap at
Bukit Sibau
Pakan.*

areas in Julau, Pakan, Nanga Wak and Meluan. However, according to 1999 Mid-Year Population Estimate, the population of Julau District was 33,000.

2) *Origin of the Name of Julau*

How did Julau get her name? Julau is situated inland from Batang Rajang and at the confluence of Julau River and Kanowit River. In the olden days, some visitors and even some local people who wanted to visit Julau could hardly notice the existence of Julau settlement due to the thick jungle around the area and poor eye sight. Hence, they called the place "Ulau" which means "hardly notice its existence" in Iban language. Slowly it was pronounced as "Julau" until today.

Another version of the legend was that in the olden days, head-hunting in Julau area was rampant. When a group of Melanau people who intended to settle down in Julau saw a head hanging on the tree top. They did not settle down there but they called the place "Ju Ulau". In Melanau (Rajang) dialect, "Ju Ulau" means "one human head". Eventually, it was pronounced as "Julau" until today.

3) *Establishment of Julau Bazaar*

Julau Bazaar was built by Chinese Foochows under the leadership of Lee Ee Lock who came from Sibau to Julau in 1936. At first they built 6 wooden shophouses with Attap roof at the present Julau Bazaar site. In 1940, six more shophouses were built and in the same year, the Roman Catholic Mission also came and built St. Alphonsus



*Y. B. Tan Sri
Datuk Amar
Alfred Jabu
ah.
Numpang
declared open
"Batu
Peningat
Rentap" at
Bukit Sibau,
Pakan on
28.10.1989.*

School in Julau. The business at first was poor. Slowly, the Ibans sold rubber and Belian posts to the Chinese Towkays who sold salt, tobacco and others to the Ibans in return. Julau district produces a lot of Belian for buildings and pepper posts. The landmark of Julau is a Burung Kenyalang standing on a burial post.

During the Japanese occupation from 1941-1945, Julau suffered tremendously and business dropped. When the Japanese occupation ended in 1945, the business picked up again. In 1949, 12 more wooden shophouses were constructed. In 1958, 10 concrete shophouses were built. However, in 1964, six wooden shophouses were burnt down and all the properties were destroyed. In 1978, six shop lots were given to the Bumiputra and the shophouses were completed in 1980. Julau was accessible by road from Bintangor in 1964.

4) *Historical Sites*

Julau District has two historical sites. Fort Brooke was built at Meluan in 1935. The fort which is located at Nanga Meluan is built entirely of Belian wood and the walls are very thick as to be bullet-proof. It is strategically built at the top of a hill. Initially, this fort housed the White Rajah's police and troops as well as the officials sent to safeguard government activities and ensure security against raids by Anti-Rajah Movement led by Asun and his followers from the Kanowit River. The fort was also once used as the Sub-district Office and Police Station. Between 1954 and 1981, the fort was used as the District Council Office and Education Department.

At Bukit Sibau in Pakan the Iban hero, Panglima Rantap's tomb was built by the Sarawak Government as a memorial and tribute to him as a great warrior who dared to go against the Brooke's Rule. It was built in the year 1989 and was declared open by the Deputy Chief Minister of Sarawak, YB Tan Sri Datuk Amar Alfred Jabu ak Numpang on 28.10.1989.

5) *Agriculture Produce*

Julau District is the major rubber producing area in Sarikei Division.



*Kubu
Brooke
(1935).*

Up to 1996, there were more than 22,000 hectares of land being planted with rubber. In 1996, more than 2,340 tonnes of rubber sheets were produced. The area for pepper planting was more than 640 hectares and in 1996, about 1,500 tonnes of black pepper and 15 tonnes of white pepper were exported. Planning to develop Native Customary Land in Julau District is within the new development masterplan. Some 16,000 hectares of the land within Sungai Wak/Lemujan and Sungai/Ulu Julau areas will be developed into oil palm plantations in 1999.

6) *Julau Today*

Besides riverine transport, Julau is accessible by road from Sarikei, Bintangor, Kanowit and Sibau. Based on a survey conducted in February 1999, Julau Bazaar has 34 units of shophouses. The details are as follows:-

<i>Type of shophouses</i>	<i>No. of units</i>
1) Double-storey concrete shophouses	18
2) Three-storey concrete shophouses	16
Total:	----- 34

There is one theatre known as Poh Ling Cinema in the Bazaar. The District Council has built a 9-stall hawker centre but due to economic downturn, the hawker stalls have closed down for quite sometime already. The District Office, Agriculture Office and other government agencies are sited about two kilometres from the Bazaar. Julau is a multi-racial bazaar where the people live together peacefully and friendly like members of a big family.

The Ibans settle down in scattered areas in the longhouses. The Malays and the Melanau are found in 8 different Kampung along Batang Serdeng and Lobak Seman. In 1999, according to the Mid-Year Population Estimate, the population of the district had increased up to 31,100.

The topography of the district is generally flat in the riverine areas with high water table and frequently subject to floods. The soils are mainly of Mukah and Anderson series. In the midland, the topography is undulating to hilly. Soils are mainly of Merit, Kapit and Bekenu series. In the midland, major crops are pepper, rubber, hill padi, fruits and vegetables whereas

VIII. MERADONG DISTRICT

1) *Meradong in General*

Bintangor Town is the administrative headquarters of Meradong District. The district has an area of 1,084 square kilometres and based on 1991 Census, it had a population of 26,972. The Chinese is the majority group and they live mainly in Bintangor Town and in 13 different Chinese settlements.



*District
Office,
Meradong,
Bintangor
(1994).*

in the riverine areas, wet padi, citrus, pineapples and sago are found in the region.

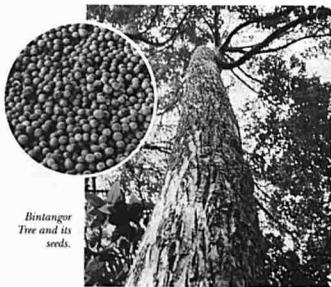
2) *The Origin of the Name of "Binatang" and "Bintangor"*

The former name of Bintangor was "Binatang" - the Town of the beasts. In the olden days, there were many monkeys, deers, wild boars which used to come to the locality especially during the fruit season. According to a legend, after the Brooke's official visited Sarikei, he came up to the present site of Bintangor, he asked his Malay driver what was the name of the place. The Malay driver



Another section of Bintangor Town.

when he saw a lot of wild animals jumping here and there replied, "Itu Binatang". (Binatang means animals in Malay). Then the Brooke's official named the place "Binatang". After Sarikei was upgraded to a division in 1973, the authority concerned changed the unpleasant name of the town from "Binatang" to "Bintangor" - a type of wild tree (*Calophyllum spp.*) which is very common in the district and the tree is found to contain a chemical compound which can be used in aiding the fight against HIV, the virus known to cause AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). Based on the pre-clinical trials, the compounds Calanolide A and B in Bintangor Tree inhibits the proliferation of HIV may prevent the outbreak of AIDS in an HIV patient.



Bintangor Tree and its seeds.

3) Agriculture Produce

The symbol of Meradong District is Bintangor Orange. It is still a very popular type of fruit in the district where it is planted along the riverine areas and along the roads by the Chinese and Iban farmers. Honey Orange, Limau Susu and Pamelos are also beginning to gain their popularity especially in the midland areas. Based on statistic figure supplied by Agriculture Department Meradong, there were 216 hectares of land in the district being planted with Bintangor Orange, Limau Jepun and Honey Orange until 1997. Up to 1997, Bintangor had planted nearly 300 hectares of rubber producing 1,025 tonnes of rubber sheets, 2,777 hectares of wet/hill padi producing more than 4,000 tonnes of padi and 425 hectares of pepper producing 2,500 tonnes of white pepper.



Bintangor Orange - the symbol of Bintangor Town.



Bintangor Main Bazaar.

4) Binatang/Bintangor Town

Binatang Bazaar was first established by Chinese Hokkien sometime in

1900s. From 1908 to 1910, there were some Chinese Foochohs migrating to Binatang. However, the official and big groups of Foochow migration to Binatang started in 1921/1922 to open up the virgin jungle for agricultural activities. In 1960s, the main shopping street stretched from the Custom Office along the river for a considerable distant and almost every shophouse exhibited cases and baskets of Binatang Oranges. On 7.7.1992 the new Meradong District Police Headquarters costing RM5.2 million was completed so that peace and security in the district could be well under control. On 23.6.1993, the opening of Bintangor/Bakong Road costing RM4 million was not only providing easier access to Bakong but also opening up more land along the road for agricultural purposes.

In recent years, the basic public amenities and facilities of Bintangor have been greatly improved. The waterfront has been beautifully landscaped, the council market, new government buildings, new shophouses, banking facilities and hotels are constructed to provide better facilities in the town. The District Sport Complex is

also under construction. Besides, the road systems in and around the town have also been greatly improved. In 1994, the District Officer and his staff moved out from the old District Office which they had occupied since 1948 to the new District Office Meradong which was built under the Federal Fund. In 1996 the office received District Office Quality Award from the State Government as the recognition for the quality improvement efforts rendered to the public.

According to a survey conducted in February 1999, Bintangor Town has a total of 232 units of various shophouses mostly situated along Jalan Dermaga, Jalan Kelupu and their nearby areas. The details of the shophouses are as follows:-

<i>Type of shophouses</i>	<i>No. of units</i>
1) Double-storey concrete shophouses	24
2) Three-storey concrete shophouses	177
3) Four-storey concrete shophouses	31

Total:	232

Bintangor Town is obviously a growing and prospering town and it is the second biggest town in Sarikei Division.



Y.B. Datuk Law Hieng Ding.



Y.B. Datuk David Teng Lung Chi.



Y.B. Encik William Mawan ak Ikom.

IX. OUTSTANDING LEADERS IN SARIKEI DIVISION

The followings are considered to be the outstanding leaders in Sarikei Division.

- 1) Y.B. Datuk Law Hieng Ding who is the Member of Parliament from Sarikei is the Federal Minister for Science, Technology and Environment.
- 2) Y.B. Datuk David Teng Lung Chi who is the Member of Council Negri from Repok, Sarikei is the State Assistant Minister for Environment and Health as well as Agriculture and Food Industry.
- 3) Y.B. Encik William Ikom @ William Mawan ak. Ikom who is the Member of Council Negri from Pakan is the State Assistant Minister for Finance and Public Utilities.
- 4) Y.B. Datuk Haji Abdul Wahab bin Haji Dolah, Member of Council Negri from Matu/Daro is the State Assistant Minister for Infrastructure Development and Communication.
- 5) Encik Sandom ak. Nyuak from Sarikei was the Minister of State from 24.9.1966 to 7.6.1970.
- 6) Y.B. Datuk Mohamed Effendi Norwawi was the Deputy Chairman of SEDC from January 1977 to December 1979 and later as its Executive Chairman from September 1981 to May 1995. He is the Chairman of Encorp Group Sdn Bhd and Broadcasting Station NTV 7. He is currently a Member of Council Negri from Dalat and he was elected as a Member Parliament for Kuala Rajang on 29.11.1999. He was appointed as the Federal Minister for Agriculture on 10.12.1999.



*Y.B. Datuk Haji Abdul Wahab bin
Haji Dolah*



Encik Sandom anak Nyuak.



*Y.B. Datuk Mohamed Effendi
Norwau.*

X. SARIKEI DISTRICT

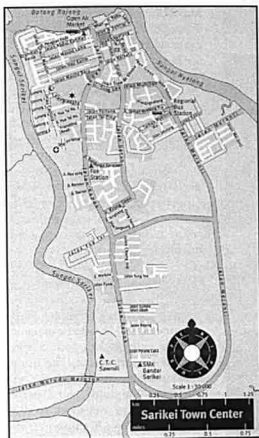
1) Sarikei Town in General

Sarikei Town is the divisional headquarters as well as administrative headquarters of Sarikei District. The district covers an area of 1,716 square kilometres and based on 1991 Census, it had a population of 49,407. However, according to 1999 Mid-Year Population Estimate, the population of Sarikei District had increased up to 59,700. The majority of the people are the Chinese, Melanaus, Ibans and Malays. It has one sub-district called Belawai which had a population of 6,097 based on 1991 Census. Belawai sub-district has a small Belawai Bazaar with 5 units of shopouses. Sarikei Town is built

between Sungai Sarikei on the left hand side and Sungai Nyelong on the right.

Sarikei is known as the Pineapple Town because it has produced large quantity of unique-textured, tasty and juicy "Sarikei Pineapple". Sarikei is also known as the Pepper Town because of its large production of high-quality pepper. In fact, Sarikei has always been well-known for its agricultural produce and it was in the last decade that it started to develop along the path of commerce and industry. Presently, Sarikei has emerged with a flourishing and rapidly progressive climate of development. The Resident and District Office Sarikei was built in

Map of
Sarikei
Town.



1937, but the Resident's Office moved to Wisma Jubli Mutiara in 1993.

Sarikei Division plays an important part in the history of Sarawak's timber industry because it was here that the value of Ramin forests was first established by the Colonial Timber Company which was

formed at the end of Second World War in 1945 by a group of Australians who had served in the military forces of Sarawak.

On 16.6.1988 Sarikei Civic Centre costing RM2.2 million was constructed at the town centre. On 16.8.1993, the ten-storey state government building, the Wisma Jubli Mutiara, was declared open for use. It marked an important milestone in the development of government building in Sarikei. Besides, there are the Federal Complex, the District Council Building, the Telecom Building, the Sport Complex, the Swimming pool, the Customs Building and the Port Authority Building being built in the town. All these impressive buildings have given a new countenance to Sarikei Town. Under Sarikei District Council's jurisdiction, a number of functional projects including the Sungai Nylong Hawker Centre (1989), the Sungai Rajang Hawker Centre (1991), SDC renovated and new Administrative Office (1995) and Sarikei Traffic Garden (1996) have been completed to provide better service to the people there.

Sarikei has seen tremendous improvement in its infrastructure development and related amenities over the past years. The public amenities and infrastructure of

*Clock Tower
and Repok
Road of
Sarikei.*



*District
Office
Sarikei built
in 1937.*



Sarikei, such as medical services, water and electricity supplies, telecommunication services and the network of roads in the urban and rural areas have shown remarkable improvement. The bridge linking the Sarikei town on both sides of the Sarikei River has enabled the expansion of Sarikei and it will

further enhance its future development. The Sarikei Waterfront Esplanade is a favourite place among the locals. It has express boat waiting sheds, greeneries, the famous "Pineapple" landmark and children playground. As the population of Sarikei increases, the appearance of a new urban area is in the making. Because of its flourishing commerce, the finance and banking business is also developing relatively fast. Today, Sarikei is proud to have 7 commercial banks and 6 finance companies as well as a number of medium hotels and private clinics in the town.

Furthermore, the development of sports, the promotion of tourist industry and its related hotel industry as well as other consumer services have thrust Sarikei towards modernisation. The future development of Sarikei will naturally depend on better communication networks to link Tanjung Manis, Bintangor, Sibu Division as well as Sri Aman Division. According to the Sarikei Agriculture Annual Report 1997, the district had planted 168 hectares of Sarikei pineapples. Most of the sweet pineapples are sold locally and some are exported to other divisions. There were 3,952 hectares of land being planted with rubber and 988,000 kilogrammes of rubber sheets were

*Aerial view
of Tanjung
Manis
Timber
Processing
Zone.*



produced. Besides, there were 466 hectares of land planted with pepper and 2,180 hectares of land planted with hill/wet padi. In 1997, it produced 1,713 tonnes of black pepper, 214 tonnes of white pepper, 2,272 tonnes of wet padi and 890 tonnes of hill padi.

2) Tanjung Manis

a) Location and Background

Sarikei is the gateway to Tanjung Manis Timber Processing Zone and it is strategically located at 13 kilometres upriver from the mouth of the Rajang River. It is the largest of the five timber

regions in Sarawak and the region produces the biggest supply of timber in Sarawak. It is accessible to ocean-going vessels and it facilitates exportation of timber products produced in the Timber Processing Zone. Tanjung Manis is a natural port and it is well-known as an important export point for logs and timber products since the early 1940s.

Tanjung Manis Timber Processing Zone, a growth centre with an area of 3,000 hectares and its development costing RM270 million, is the brainchild of the Chief Minister of Sarawak YAB



*Wisma Jubli
Mutiara,
Jalan
Bersatu.*

Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr.) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud. It will be the largest integrated timber complex with its own well-planned township so far established in Sarawak. The concept is to centralise the industry within proximity of the source of raw materials.

b) Implementation

Based on the information available from Sarawak Timber Industry Development Corporation, the Tanjung Manis TPZ will be implemented in four phases for a period of 20 years as follows:-

Phase	Year	Area
I	1990-1995	510 hectares
II	1996-2000	780 hectares
III	2001-2005	900 hectares
IV	2005-2010	805 hectares

c) Accessibility

Tanjung Manis is not only accessible by river through the mighty Batang Rajang, but it is also accessible by road. On 23.3.1998, the 23-kilometre Tanjung Manis/Serdeng Road costing RM42 millions was fully completed to link the timber complex to the nearby areas in Igan, Matu, Mukah and

Serdeng. A RM45 million 25-kilometre road is to be built to link Belawai to Tanjung Manis. Eventually, Tanjung Manis coastal areas will also be linked to the major towns such as Sibul, Bintulu, Miri and even Kuching.

Works on the first phase of the RM41 million Tanjung Manis Airport sited on a 200-hectare land in Belawai would be completed by the middle of the year 2001. This was announced by the Chief Minister of Sarawak, YAB Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr.) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud on 19.4.1998. Upon completion, the 1.2-kilometre airstrip will cater the DASH 8-200 series, a 37 passenger aircraft and, hence, it would bring the timber processing zone closer to all the major towns in the State. At the same time, the Airport would provide a faster and more convenient mode of transportation for the people including foreigners, investors and the local people to the timber processing complex. The second phase of the project will extend the airstrip by 300 metres. Upon final completion by the year 2010, the airstrip will be able to handle ten aircrafts at a time and will cater the DASH 8-300 series aircrafts as well.

d) Fishing Complex

A fishing complex will be built in the Tanjung Manis Timber Processing Zone by Sarawak Economic Development Corporation (SEDC) to provide facilities like food-processing, ice plants or cold storage rooms and platoon wharves. The additional facilities would be fully utilised by the fishermen to unload their catches before their products could be transported and processed into manufactured food products for export. The setting up of the complex would help to enhance Tanjung Manis as a strategic location with facilities for ocean-bound liners to berth at the port.



*Payang Puri
Hotel, Sarikei
Town.*



*Sarikei
Divisional
Mosque.*

e) Rajang Port Authority Building

The Rajang Port Authority building at the Tanjung Manis Processing Zone costing RM75 million is poised to become an

important port-of-calls for ocean liners as it offers the best and most up-to-date port facilities as well as qualified personnels in cargo handling. When fully completed, it will provide excellent port facilities to all users in Batang Rajang Basin areas.

f) Future of Tanjung Manis

With its vast tracts of fertile land endowed with rich natural resources, Tanjung Manis area will become one of the most progressive rural growth centres in the State. The development of the timber processing industries, sago and oil palm plantations as well as mechanised padi estates in the nearby areas have in fact enhanced the economic potentials for the benefit of the State and the local people there. Describing Tanjung Manis as the best natural deepwater port in the region, the Chief Minister of Sarawak believed that by the year 2005 - 2008, Tanjung Manis would become a new industrial satellite township with a population of 30,000. He was optimistic that in addition to the existence of the wood-based industries, an additional of 100,000 hectares of land will be used for padi plantation in Pulau Bruit, sago and oil palm plantations in



The entrance of Taman Tasik, Sarikei.



Taman Tasik Sarikei.

Matu, Igan and Mukah areas and aquaculture projects in Tanjung Manis and Lower Rajang areas. Local people who have migrated to urban areas will return to grab the numerous job opportunities created from these industries.

3) *Taman Tasik Sarikei*

The opening of a new pristine landmark, the Taman Tasik Sarikei at Kilometre 2, Jalan Repok in June 1998 had brought joy and cheers to the local populace of the Pineapple Town. Costing RM1.4 million upon completion, the 3 hectare garden will become the "green lung" of the town to create a healthy environment and cleaner atmosphere. The vast changes done on the land has nevertheless transformed the area into pleasant and scenic atmosphere covered by an undulating garden showing a natural hilly scenery. The lake garden includes landscaping, a hill top pavilion, jogging track, recreation areas, artificial lake of 2,000 square metres, food kiosks and a fountain. The idea behind this momentous project is to provide better recreational facilities to cater the needs of the increasing population. Its



*Sebangkoi
Country
Park,
Sarikei.*



*Civic Centre,
Sarikei along
Jalan Market.*



*Outdoor
Stadium
Sarikei.*

aim is to improve and upgrade the quality of life and living standard of the people as well as enhance towards the creation of a clean and healthy image of the town.

4. Semangkoi Country Park

Besides Taman Tasik Sarikei, Semangkoi Country Park along Sarikei/Sri Aman Road is also a popular place for the local people to enjoy the natural environment and spend their weekend in the jungle. Bukit Semangkoi was once the forgotten area, it was transformed by Sarikei District Council into a designated well-known recreational spot for local residents and visitors to carry out their outdoor activities. Its main attractions are the waterfall amidst natural surroundings coupled with camping sites, rest house, canteen, man-made lake, children's pool and playground.

5. Sarikei Town Today

According to a survey conducted in February 1999, there are 439 units



*Wharf Road,
Sarikei.*



*St. Anthony's
Church,
Sarikei.*

of various shophouses in Sarikei. However, the total does not include the industrial shops established along Jalan Industri and Jalan Repok. The details of the shophouses are as follows:-

No.	Location	Type of concrete shophouses					Total
		5-storey	4-storey	3-storey	2-storey	1-storey	
1)	Jalan Bank			28	39		67
2)	Jalan Repok		36	35	16	2(wooden)	89
3)	Jalan Merdeka	10	18				28
4)	Jalan Masjid Lama	3	46				49
5)	Jalan Central		3	8			11
6)	Jalan Bersatu		14	21	8		43
7)	Jalan Tok Tok		11	6			17
8)	Jalan Jubli Mutiara		40				40
9)	Jalan Nyelong		17				17
10)	Jalan Abdul Razak		27				27
11)	Jalan Abdul Karim		51				51
Total:		13	206	155	63	2	439

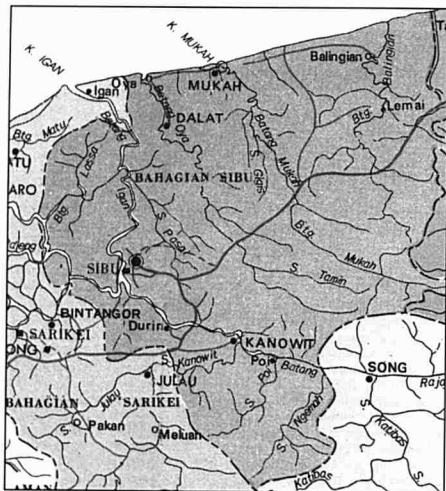
As a whole, the town of Pineapple is developing steadily in the Lower Rajang Basin. The government's efforts, complemented by the full support of the people will set a new pace of development in Sarikei. With the spreading of its wing to Sarikei, Chemai Jaya College has really created educational opportunities for the students in this booming division to pursue their academic ambitions and to seek further educational advancement in their own homeland. Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Government represented by Y. B. Datuk Law Hieng Ding, the Federal Minister for Science, Technology and

Environment and Encik Ismail Mohd. Yusof, the Chief Executive Officer cum Principal of Chemai Jaya College in Sarikei on 17.10.1999 in order to proceed with the establishment of the college in Sarikei in May 2000. Some days in the near future, Sarikei may turn into a bustling centre not only for academic study and commercial trading but also for commercial farming in Sarawak, doing justice to the division's famed oranges and pineapples! Obviously following the footsteps of Sibu Town, Sarikei will become a robust and economic powerhouse of the Lower Rajang as well as one of the fastest developing towns in Sarawak.

CHAPTER 9

SIBU DIVISION

Map of Sibu Division



Sibu - The Town of Express Boats

I. INTRODUCTION

Sibu Division, the Third Division of Sarawak, has an area of 12,640 square kilometres and based on 1991 Census, it had a population of 259,127. However, according to the 1999 Mid-Year Population Estimate, the population of Sibu Division had increased up to 314,200. Altogether Sibu Division has 1,081 villages/longhouses consisting of 21,133 families.

Historically, Sibu was part of Brunei Territory until 1853. In 1853 Sultan Abdul Mumin of Brunei ceded the Lower Rajang Basin to James Brooke and, hence, it became part of Sarawak Territory from

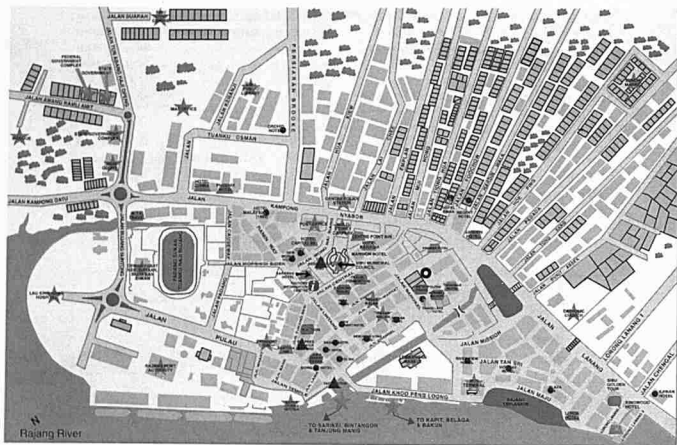
that time onwards. Originally, the only settlement in Sibu was a small Melanau Kampung called Kampung Nangka, a little way down the Igan. Slowly, Sibu town was developed on a swampy low-lying area where the main stream of the Rajang divides into two, the Rajang Proper and the Igan.

Prior to 2.4.1973, Sibu Division was known as Third Division and the present Sarikei and Kapit Divisions were under its jurisdiction. However, after 2.4.1973, part of Third Division became Sibu Division. The Division comprises of four districts and two sub-districts namely:-

<i>District</i>	<i>Sub-district</i>	<i>Population in 1991</i>
1) Sibu District	-	170,430
2) Dalat District	Oya Sub-district	21,609
3) Mukah District	Balingian Sub-district	42,000
4) Kanowit District	-	25,088

	Total	259,127

Map of Sibu Town



Sibu Division has 4 towns and 17 bazaars in the whole division namely:-

- 1) Sibu Town
- 2) Kanowit Town
- 3) Mukah Town
- 4) Sungai Merah Bazaar
(Sin Choo San)
- 5) Durin Bazaar
- 6) Machan Bazaar
- 7) Nanga Dap Bazaar
- 8) Ngemah Bazaar
- 9) Stampang Bazaar
- 10) Selangau Bazaar
- 11) Dalat Bazaar
- 12) Sungai Kut Bazaar
- 13) Oya Bazaar
- 14) Balingian Bazaar
- 15) Nanga Tamin Bazaar
- 16) Tamin Bazaar,
59th Kilometre
Sibu/Bintulu Road
- 17) Tepus Bazaar
- 18) Teku Bazaar
- 19) Pradom Bazaar
- 20) Pusat Indah, Aup
- 21) Sibu Jaya New Township

II. THE ORIGIN OF THE NAME OF SIBU

A story revealed that in the olden days, there were plenty of wild rambutan trees around the present Sibu Town. Soon after Sir James Brooke took over the administration of Rajang Basin from Brunei in 1853, his official was sent to visit places along Batang Rajang. When he arrived at the

existing site of Sibu Town, he pointed to the wild rambutan trees growing in abundance and asked "What is the name of the tree?" The guide who was an Iban answered, "Sibau" (wild rambutan). Then the Brooke's official named the place "Sibau" which eventually was pronounced as "Sibu" until present day.

However until today, Sibu Municipal Council (SMC) has not decided whether Sibu is to be known as the Town of Buah Sibau, Buah Dabai or Expressboats. The former Chairman of Sibu Municipal Council, Encik Kong Sien Han, said, "Questionnaires have been prepared and to be sent to the people to seek for their opinion. The choice must reflect the town's identity".



*The crest of
Sibu Municipal
Council.*

Further information on the likely symbols of Sibü Town is appended below:-

1) Buah Sibau (Scientific Name: Sapindaceae)

Buah Sibau is the wild rambutan which is similar to the ordinary rambutan in appearance but it is smaller in size and more hairy. Buah Sibau is rather sour and its flesh does not come off from the seed easily. The skin is a bit thicker with reddish and greenish tones than the ordinary rambutan.

A drawing of the Sibau fruit can be found at the crest of Sibü Municipal Council. It is dangling from the beak of the hornbill.



*Buah Sibau
(Wild
Rambutan).*



*Fruiting
Dabai
(Canarium
odontophyllum)
tree.*

2) Buah Dabai (Scientific Name: Canarium Odontophyllum)

Buah Dabai is a type of local olive which can be found in abundance in Sibü markets. Rather dark in colour over the skin and deep purple at the inside, the fruit is shaped like a rugby ball. For the better quality Dabai, the flesh is usually yellowish in colour and whitish flesh is considered second class Dabai. Besides, the

inferior variety has thinner layer of flesh over a somewhat bigger seed.

3) Express Boats

Sibü is very famous of her aerodynamically-shaped express boats not only in Malaysia but also in South East Asia and even beyond. "Made in Sibü" express boats could be seen plying the countries in South China Sea.



*Sibu - The
Town of
Express Boats.*



*View of Sibu
Town and the
Mighty
Rajang River.*

The modern express boat is comparable or even bigger than the Boeing 735-500 series. A check reveals that about 30 big and small

shipyards along Batang Rajang and Igan River are building express boats for sale in the local markets and overseas.

III. EARLY MALING/SIBU SETTLEMENT

In 1851, Anglican Bishop MacDougal who accompanied Tuan Besar Brooke Brooke to visit Kanowit area mentioned that there was a small village called Sibu (Maling). Sibu was producing salt at that time and people who proceeded to Kanowit normally would stop over at Sibu. Even the first Mill Hill Catholic Missionary to Batang Rajang often stopped at Sibu for overnights before proceeding to Kanowit. Sibu was a place of great importance and this prompted Father Dunn to start a mission in Sibu in November 1897.

Fort Brooke was established in 1862 on an island at the river bend opposite the site of the present Sibu town. This river bend was called Tanjung Maling and the village on the island was also called Maling. Meanwhile the small settlement, Sibu, opposite Maling grew up rapidly due to its position as a riverine port. Because it was very near to Maling, it was sometimes called Maling Town. The fort was built not only for the purpose of defence but also as a centre of government administration. On 13.5.1870, Fort Brooke was attacked by Lintong and Kanowit Dayaks. The earliest Chinese who came to do business near the Fort Brooke were the Chinese Hokkien and the Teochew. By 1871, there were about 20 wooden shophouses in Maling already.

On 1.6.1873 the Rajang Basin became a residency with its Divisional Headquarters at Sibu. This new status brought rapid development to Sibu. In spite of the fact that Kanowit became a commercial centre sometime in 1840s and the building of Fort

Emma in 1859, by 1880 Sibu had overtaken Kanowit as a riverine port of great importance. In 1887 the Sibu Chinese traders with the Government's aids built at the site of the present Channel Road a row of 60 belian-wood shophouses. A systematic plan of Sibu Bazaar developed at about this time.

IV. EARLY CHINESE SETTLEMENT ALONG LOWER RAJANG RIVER

After the mid-nineteenth century, a great number of Chinese especially the Hokkien merchants came to settle in the Rajang Valley, Sarawak. This was brought about by two important factors. Firstly, Sarawak under the White Rajah became politically stable and peaceful which attracted various races from the neighbouring regions. Secondly, the White Rajah encouraged and arranged for the Chinese settlers to come and cultivate the land for agricultural purposes as well as to start various business in order to develop the economy of Sarawak. In 1880, Rajah Charles Brooke arranged 500 Chinese Hokkien to settle down in the lower Rajang area. Majority of the Hokkien settlers came to Sibu to do business with the natives there. They built Attap houses along the bank of Loba Lembingan where the Palace Theatre now sited.

In order to attract the Chinese to come and to develop the economy of Sarawak, especially along the Rajang Basin, Rajah Charles Brooke put an advertisement in the Sarawak Gazette printed on 29.11.1880. Quoted below is the Sarawak Government Notification from Rajah Charles Brooke.

Government Notification

I, Charles Brooke, Rajah make known the following terms which the Government of Sarawak hereby agrees to fulfill with any Company of Chinese who will engage to bring into the Rajang River Chinese settlers with wives and families numbering not less than three hundred souls, who will employ themselves in gardening and farming paddy or in other cultivations -

- 1st - The Government will provide land sufficient for their requirements free of charge.*
- 2nd - The Government on first starting will build them temporary houses, and make a good path to their landing place.*
- 3rd - The Government will give them one Pasu of rice per man or woman a month and a little salt and half the amount to every child for the first 12 months.*
- 4th - The Government engage to keep upstream communication with Kuching and carry any necessities for these settlers on the most reasonable terms.*
- 5th - The Government will build a Police Station near them to protect them and assist in making themselves understood in the native language and generally look after them.*
- 6th - In carrying out the above engagements the Government expect the said Chinese will permanently settle in the territory of Sarawak.*

Kuching, 11 November, 1880

(Note: 1 Pasu = 14.4 kilogrammes approx.)

*A scene of old
street Sibü after
big fire in
1928.*



*Sibü big flood
at Market
Road in
1934.*



It was under the terms and conditions laid down by the White Rajah that arrangements were made for about 500 Chinese to come over and to cultivate the land along the Lower Rajang areas. Later on, many of these Chinese moved to Sibü area.

However, large scale of Chinese immigration into the Rajang did not occur until the turn of the 20th century when the Government directly sponsored the entry of three different Chinese dialect groups into the Rajang, the Foochows in 1900, the Cantonese in 1901, and the Henghuas in 1911. Following the introduction of the rubber trees late in the first decade of the 20th century, many thousands of Chinese immigrants poured into the State over the next three decades.

Below are the four famous pioneers who brought in big numbers of Chinese immigrants to Sibü

Sibu old town.



Old Central Road, Sibu.



1) Teo Yien Too (1867-1950) Hokkien Pioneer

In the year 1884, Teo Yien Too, the pioneer of Hokkien arrived in Maling (Sibu) from China. At that time, Maling (Sibu) had about 100 Chinese, most of them were the Hokkien and Teochew groups. They resided in Attap Street (the present area along the Palace Theatre) and



*Mr. Teo Yien Too (1867 - 1950)
1st Chinese Headman for Sibu.*

involved themselves in rubber and pepper tradings with the indigenous people in Batang Rajang areas. In 1897, Teo Yien Too was one of the fund raising committee members to rebuild the Eng Ann Teng Tuapekong Temple. He was appointed as the first Kapitan China for Sibu area by the Brooke Government from 1906 to 1927. Teo Yien Too who married in 1900 had 3 sons and 2 daughters.

During the Japanese occupation, he together with 27 others were arrested by the Japanese authority for the alleged involvement in Anti-Japanese activities. However, they were released after 33 days of detention. Kapitan Teo passed away in Sibu Main Bazaar in 1950 at the age of 83.

2) *Wong Nai Siong (1849-1924)*
Foochow Pioneer

The most famous Chinese pioneer to open up Sibu (or New Foochow as it was called in the olden days) was none other than the famous Wong Nai Siong. He was introduced to the second White Rajah, Sir Charles Brooke by his son-in-law Dr. Lim Boon Keng in 1900. With the assistance of Kapitan Ong Tiang Swee of Kuching, Wong Nai Siong drew up an agreement with the White Rajah.

Wong Nai Siong, the eldest of four sons of a farmer, Wong King Po, was born in July 1849 at Mintsing village in Foochow District of Fukien Province, China. In 1894, Wong Nai Siong possessed a scholastic degree of Hau Lieng (2nd degree) of the Ching Dynasty.

He was a patriot and a revolutionary of China. In 1898 when the Reform Movement initiated by the scholars and intellectuals failed, he escaped to Nanyang (South East Asia). So, in 1900 he arrived at Sarawak seeking agricultural land for cultivation and he signed an agreement with the second White Rajah of Sarawak to bring in farmers to settle and cultivate the land in the Rajang Basin on 27.7.1900. The White Rajah gave him a loan of \$30,000 to cover the costs of transporting the settlers from China to Sibu. The



Wong Nai Siong
(1849 - 1924)

loan was to be repaid over a period of five years. Wong undertook to recover the loan from the settlers by making them to pay two-third of their annual produce as tax until the debt was fully repaid.

On 20.2.1901, seventy-two Foochows were brought over by Wong Nai Siong from China to Sungai Merah (Sin Choo San). On 16.3.1901, another 535 Foochows were brought over to Sungai Merah to join the first group of pioneers. In order to cope up with the gradual increasing Foochow community, a school known as Guong Ann was opened in Sungai Merah in 1901 and another school known as Kwong Hua School was established at Sungai Sadit. Wong Nai Siong was appointed as "Gangzhu" or Proprietor to take charge of the Foochow settlers when

the settlement was fully established in Sungai Merah.

In 1901, Wong Nai Siong obtained a second loan of \$10,000 from the White Rajah to bring more settlers to Sibü. He gave the money to Lik Chiang for safe-keeping but Lik Chiang ran away to Taiwan with the money.

On 7.6.1902, Wong Nai Siong managed to bring another group of 511 Foochows and set up a custom office at Lower Rajang to collect tolls from farmers and traders. This landed him in trouble because he was accused of collecting taxes without the Rajah's authority. He was arrested but was released not long afterwards. Upon his release, he promised to pay the debts incurred but he failed due to poor harvests by the Foochow Community. In the end, the White Rajah gave up hope to collect the repayment of loan.

In June 1904, Wong Nai Siong returned to China and he died at



Neo Federal Complex, Old Airport Road, Sibü.



Sungai Merah Bazaar, Sibü.

Mintsing on 22.9.1924 at the age of 76. Although he spent less than four years in Sarawak, he made a great impact on the State. He introduced one of the most forceful communities i.e. Foochow into Sarawak. In those days the Foochows did not know any of the local dialects and, hence, they encountered

numerous problems. However, they never gave up. Their resilience and simple mindedness in carving out a better life amid a harsh and uncompromising environment where diseases and illnesses came in many names and forms, deserved the highest respect.

Undaunted, they tilled the land, experimenting with different crops while some traded with the local tribes and other traders. It was virtually a hand-to-mouth existence for the Foochows in those days. However, all these hardships led to the success of the Foochow in Sibü.

Today the people in Sibü especially the Foochow community still respect and remember Wong Nai Siong. A Chinese Secondary School and a street in Sibü were named after him in 1950 and 1945 respectively. Wong Nai Siong could therefore be considered as one of the great men and the founder of Sibü.

After Wong Nai Siong left for China, Rev. James Hoover was appointed



*Sibü
Municipal
Council
Building.*



*Civic Centre,
Sibü.*

to take charge of the Foochow settlement in Sibü. Within 32 years under the leadership of Rev. James Hoover, the settlements achieved great success, developed and expanded besides attracting more influx of new Foochow settlers from

China to Sibü. The expansion of Foochow settlements from 1910 to 1940 in Sarawak are as follows:-

<i>Year</i>	<i>Region of Expansion</i>
1910	Foochow Settlement extended to Kanowit
1912	Foochow settlement extended to Sarikei
1921	Foochow settlement extended to Binatang (Bintangor)
1923	Foochow settlement extended to Kapit
1925	Foochow settlement extended to Mukah
1926	Foochow settlement extended to Bintulu and Baram
1936	Foochow settlement extended to Julau
1940	Foochow settlement extended to Kuching



*Then Kung Suk.
(1870 - 1936)*

In 1991, Foochows in Sibü celebrated their 90th anniversary in a grand way. Foochows from all over the world came to Sibü to witness the grand occasion.

and Salim mainly for pepper and rubber plantings but later it spread out to the following localities:-

3) *Then Kung Suk (Tang Kung Shook)
(1870-1936)Cantonese Pioneer*

A Cantonese pioneer from Sanshui District of Guangdong Province in China, Then Kung Suk passed the Provincial Examination and actively involved in the Reform Movement in China. He migrated to Nanyang (South East Asia) to seek for employment. On 5.3.1901 together with Chiang Cho Shiong, another Cantonese pioneer signed an agreement with Rajah Charles Brooke to bring in Cantonese farmers from China to Sibü. From 1902 to 1917, there were about 1,000 Cantonese immigrants being brought over to Sibü. They had opened up areas in Lanang

<i>Year</i>	<i>Locality</i>
1911	Sungai Stabau
1912	Lower Naman
1914	Sungai Naman
1915	Upper Naman
1916	Sungai Nibong and Durin
1917	Tanjung Lukut, Sungai Petai, Sungai Pok, and Sungai Pak.

Then Kung Suk was appointed as "Gangzhu" or Proprietor in Guangdong settlement in Sibü. He returned to China in 1910 and died on 13.8.1936. As a pioneer in opening up the Rajang Basin, he was well respected and remembered. A road known as Jalan Then Kung Suk, is named after him in Sibü.

4) *Rev. Dr. William Brewster - Leader of Henghua Settlement*

Under the leadership of Rev. Dr. William Brewster and Methodist Pastor Li Zhang Shui, an agreement with White Rajah Sir Charles Brooke was signed to recruit Henghua people from Putian and Zianyou China to Sibü. On 22.5.1912, the first group of Henghua settlers totalling to 101 were settled at Sungai Merah, Sibü. On 17.6.1913, a second group numbering 44 Henghua settlers also arrived to join the first group of the immigrants. Altogether, they opened up four Henghua Settlements namely Henghua Settlement at Sungai Merah in 1912, Henghua Settlement at Sungai Teku in 1915, Henghua Settlement at Penasu, Igan River on 1928 and Henghua Settlement at Sungai Poi in Upper Rajang in 1929.



*Rev. Dr. William Brewster.
(1872 - 1935)*

V. SIBU IN THE EARLY DAYS

In the olden days, Sibü used to suffer flash flood several times a year because the Sibü locality is low-lying with poor drainage. There was a river called Sungai Lembaungan (also known as Pulau Babi locally) which flowed along the back of Lau King Howe Hospital, passing through Kampung Nyabor, Palace Theatre and Main Bazaar before entering Rajang River. Now, this river had long been filled up and high raised buildings are being built on it.

On the night of 10.2.1889, Sibü wooden bazaar consisting 60 shophouses was gutted by fire, the whole Bazaar was burnt to the ground including the more permanent shophouses built in 1887. The cost of the damage was estimated in the region of \$15,000.00. After the big fire, all shopkeepers wanted to build concrete shophouses but due to financial difficulties, only temporary timber shophouses were constructed to meet the immediate needs within the same year. This fire had caused much destruction and delay to the development of Sibü area.

By early 20th Century, Sibü had become the commercial centre of the Rajang Basin after 20 years of fire destruction. The vast hinterland with rich natural resources such as timber and the growing population had caused business in the town to flourish. The Chinese in Sibü at that time were mostly

*Chinese
Pagoda, Sibü.*



traders with a few being engaged in farming. At the outskirts of the town lived the Malays and Melanau in Kampung Nyabor, Kampung Hilir, Kampung Datu and Kampung Nangka. Further into the interior were the Iban longhouses. Business transaction between the natives and the Chinese was mostly through barter trading. On 7.3.1928 Sibü Town was destroyed by fire for the second time. The shopkeepers took quite sometime to rebuild the shophouses.

In 1871, the Tuapekong Temple was built by the Hokkien settlers in Sibü to serve as the centre of Chinese religious activities

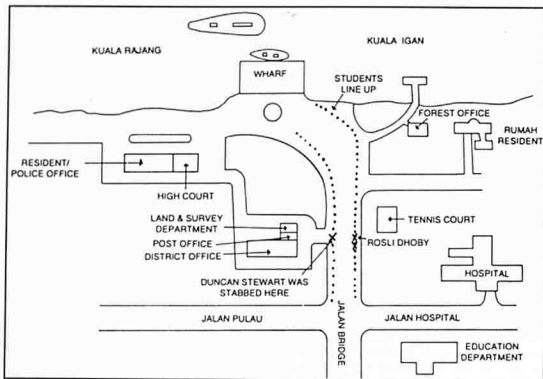
and to house the statue of Tuapekong deity which they brought from China. In August 1897, Sibü Chinese rebuilt the temple designed in the traditional style at the cost of \$9,106/-. However, in 1945, when the Allied Forces recaptured Sibü Town from the Japanese, the temple was destroyed due to the bombing but the Tuapekong statue remained unharmed. Twelve years later, new Tuapekong Temple under the chairmanship of Chew Geok Lin was built and it was declared open by Sir Anthony Abell, the third British Colonial Governor of Sarawak on 7.9.1957. In 1987, the management under the chairmanship of Chu Tieng Bok carried out the building of a pagoda for worship of the Goddess of Mercy and on 4.5.1989, the pagoda building was declared open by the late Y.B. Datuk Amar Sim Kheng Hong, the then Deputy Chief Minister of Sarawak.

VI. HEROES OF SIBÜ - MALAY HERO ROSLI BIN DHOBY (1932-1950) & OTHERS

Sibü had produced an outstanding hero when Sarawak was a colony under the British Rule. He was none other than Rosli bin Dhoby who refused to be ruled by the British Colonialism. At the age of 17, Rosli bin Dhoby was a student-teacher and he was active in Sibü-based Malay Youth Movement.

On 3.12.1949, Rosli bin Dhoby made a heroic history when he headed the Rukun 13 (Black Crow Group) who killed Mr. Duncan Stewart, the second Colonial Governor of

*Locality Plan
to show the
venue where
Mr. Duncan
Stewart was
stabbed in
Sibu on
3. 12. 1949.*



Sarawak in Sibu. Being an idealistic young man, Rosli bin Dhoby believed that he could end the colonial rule by killing the Governor. In the end, Rosli bin Dhoby and 18 other members of the Malay Youth Movement were arrested by the Colonial Government.

Mr. Duncan Stewart, the second Governor of Sarawak was stabbed by Rosli bin Dhoby using a traditional poisonous dagger. The Governor was rushed to Lau King Howe Hospital and next morning, he was flown to Singapore for treatment. However, Mr. Duncan Stewart died of severe injuries on 10.12.1949. The Heroes, Rosli bin Dhoby and Morshidi bin

Sidek were hanged on 2.3.1950 while Bujang bin Suntong and Awang Rambli bin Haji Matasruddin (Amit) were executed on 23.2.1950. 15 other comrades were imprisoned for a period in between 3 weeks to 15 years.

After 46 years, the remains of our heroes, Rosli bin Dhoby, Morshidi Sidek, Bujang Suntong and Awang Ramli were exhumed from the Central Prison, Kuching and reburied at the cemetery of Masjid An Nur, Sibu on 2.3.1996.

In the eye of the Colonial Government, Rosli bin Dhoby and his comrades were

*"Get out of
Sarawak or
you die!"
shouted Rosli
Dhoby when
he stabbed
Mr. Duncan
Stewart to
death in Sibu
on
3. 12. 1949.*



nothing more than criminals who led a group of Sibu-based Malay Youth Movement to kill the second Colonial Governor, Mr. Duncan Stewart in 1949. Rosli bin Dhoby and others were actually neither criminals nor murderers but freedom fighters against the British Colonial Rule. They were in fact early nationalists who did not want a colonial rule. They died for the sake of defending the rights and sovereignty of Sarawak against White Men's Rule.

In order to honour his patriotic spirit and safe guarding the sovereignty of Sarawak, a secondary school along Sibu New Airport Road (Tunku Abdul Rahman Road) was

named after Rosli bin Dhoby. On 27.7.1993, Rosli bin Dhoby was officially declared by the State Government of Sarawak as one of the heroes of Sarawak. Even his comrades namely Morshidi Sidek, Bujang Suntong and Awang Ramli are well remembered in Sibu. A road each is named after three of them in Sibu Town.

VII. SIBU UNDER JAPANESE OCCUPATION

On 25.12.1941 the Japanese troops occupied Kuching and, on the same day, the Japanese bombers carried out air strike on Sibu. On 27.12.1941 Mr. Andrew MacPherson,

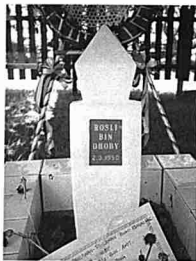


Rosli Dhoby

the Resident of Sibü, appointed Datu Mohammad to take charge of Sibü and then he left for Upper Rajang together with other European officers. Unfortunately, they were betrayed and all were killed by the Japanese at Upper Batang Ai.

After the departure of the Resident, rioters started looting the government rice store and British Company stores in the godowns. On 28.12.1941 the government padi store at Bukit Lima was also forced open but the Chinese leaders with the help of the police force managed to prevent the looting.

On 19.1.1942, a Japanese troop led by Asoa arrived in Sibü and thus putting an end to the looting and disorder. On 23.6.1942, Senda Kojiro was appointed as the Japanese Resident of Sibü. Together with 60 Japanese officials Senda Kojiro formed the divisional



*The tomb of
Rosli Dhoby
in Sibü.*

government in Sibü. By 15.8.1942, the Japanese military government carried out a massive arrest of the Chinese leaders who were suspected to raise money for China Relief Fund. However, the 21 personalities were released on 16.9.1942. By October 1942, all schools were ordered to close and the Japanese Public Schools were opened to brainwash the people through schooling.

The Japanese Military Government impounded large areas at Sungai Merah for building an airport. The airport was constructed by forcing the local workers to complete it but later it was bombed by the Allied planes. In 1944, the Japanese arrested more than 30 Chinese accusing them for anti-Japanese activities. On 9.6.1945, some of them were executed while others had to serve imprisonment. Meanwhile, the Allied Forces counter-attack began. On 25.3.1945, the

*Aerial view
of Sibü
Town.*



excellent native market. From here, the famous express boats leave for all destinations along Rajang River, making Sibü an ideal jumping-off point for visiting indigenous people such as the Iban, Orang Ulu, Malay and Melanau communities.

The area of Sibü District is 3,150 square kilometres. Based on 1980 census statistics, the population of Sibü was 130,595. The details are as follows:-

Australian Force landed at Bario and, simultaneously, Allied planes began to bomb Sibü. Finally, on 15.8.1945 the Japanese surrendered unconditionally to the Allied Forces. The Japanese Resident of Sibü carried a white flag and handed over his sword to Major Sochon of the Allied Forces as a symbol of Japanese's surrender thus ending the Japanese rule in Sibü for 3 years and 8 months.

VIII. RACIAL COMMUNITIES IN SIBÜ DISTRICT

Sibü, the second largest town in Sarawak, is the main port and gateway for the Rajang Basin. Also known as "New Foochow" because Sibü was actually developed by the hardworking Foochows in the early 20th Century.

The Town is situated at the bank of Lower Rajang River and it is about 104 kilometres from Kuala Rajang. Sibü is a good place for tourists to shop for handicrafts and it has an



*Clock Tower
within
Rajang
Esplanade,
Sibü.*

<i>Race</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Chinese	80,938	62%
Iban	24,877	19.1%
Malay	13,672	10.5%
Melanau	9,314	7.1%
Bidayuh	449	0.4%
Others	1,168	0.9%
	-----	-----
Total:	130,595	100%

However, according to 1991 census, the population of Sibu had increased up to 170,430, an increase of more than 30% for the past 10 years. In 1999, based on the Mid-Year Population Estimate, the population of Sibu District had further increased up to 208,200.

a) Chinese Community

The Chinese migration and settlement in Sibu first started by the Hokkien community in 1880 but the impact was not great because the number of Hokkien immigrants was small. In actual fact, the three big settlement projects were started off by the Foochow founder, Mr. Wong Nai Siong on 20.2.1901, the Cantonese pioneer, Mr. Then Kung Suk in 1902 and a Methodist Missionary worker, Dr. Rev. William Brewster who led Henghua community from China to Sibu in

1912. A further Henghua immigration took place three years later.

Among the Chinese population in Sibu Division, the following persons are the most outstanding figures:-

- 1) Teo Yien Too (1867-1950) was the Chinese Hokkien Pioneer in Sibu. He became the first Kapitan China for Sibu from 1906 to 1927. He died in Sibu in 1950.



Tan Sri Datuk Amar Ling Beng Siew



Datuk Amar Ling Beng Siong

- 2) Wong Nai Siong (1849-1924) was the Chinese Foochow Pioneer in Sibu. He died in China in the year 1924.
- 3) Then Kung Suk (1870-1936) was the Chinese Cantonese Pioneer in Sibu. He passed away in China on 13.8.1936.
- 4) Tan Sri Datuk Amar Ling Beng Siew was the President of Sarawak



*Tan Sri Datuk Patinggi Dr. Wong
Soon Kai.*



Y.B. Datuk Wong Soon Koh.



Y.B. Dr. Soon Choon Teck.

Chinese Association (SCA) which came on the political scene in July 1962 but was dissolved in 1974. From 1955 to 1962, he was a Member of Council Negri. From 1958 till 1962, he was a Member of Sarawak Supreme Council and from 1963 to 1969, he was a Member of Parliament.

- 5) Datuk Amar Ling Beng Siong from Sibru became the State Minister of Youth and Culture of Sarawak from 24.9.1966 to 6.7.1970.
- 6) Tan Sri Datuk Patinggi Dr. Wong Soon Kai from Sibru was the President of Sarawak United People's Party (1990-1997) and he was appointed as the Deputy Chief Minister of Sarawak from

1991 - 1996. Now he is the State Science Advisor.

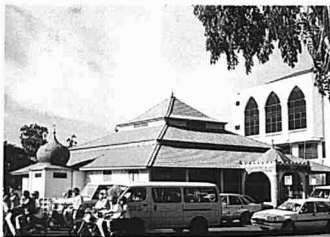
- 7) Y.B. Datuk Wong Soon Koh, a Member of Council Negri from Bawang Assan is the State Minister of Infrastructure Development and Communications. He was the former Speaker of Council Negri Sarawak from 1.3.1994 to 14.11.1996.
- 8) Y.B. Dr. Soon Choon Teck, a Member of Council Negri from Dudong is the State Assistant Minister of Environment and Public Health.

b) Malay Community

Sometime in the middle of 19th century the Malays, formerly coastal dwellers, began to move into Sibru

area from the west part of Sarawak. They continued their trade and took advantage of the riches of the virgin Rajang territory along Sibu area. Finally, they settled down in Sibu at Kampung Nyabor, Kampung Nangka and Kampung Masjid, Sibu.

The outstanding Malay figures from Sibu Division are as follows:-



Sibu old mosque has a three-storey roof which is pyramidal in shape.

- 1) Tun Datuk Patinggi Tuanku Haji Bujang bin Tuanku Osman (1898-1986) was the second Head of State of Sarawak from 1969 - 1977. He died in Kuching on 28.11.1986 at the age of 88.

- 2) Tun Datuk Patinggi Haji Ahmad Zaidi Adruce Mohd. Nor of Kampung Hilir, Sibu became the present Head of State of Sarawak from 1985 until today.

c) Iban Community

At the beginning of 19th century, groups of Ibans started to penetrate the headwaters of Katibas and Sarikei from Batang Lupar and Batang Saribas. By 1850, they had reached the vicinity of Lower Rajang especially around Sibu area. Many

Ibans started to grow cash crops such as rubber and pepper but some of them still centred very much on padi shifting cultivation. Later on, many Ibans left home to work at the timber companies.

The outstanding Iban leaders from Sibu Division are as follows:

- 1) Y.B. Datuk Amar Leo Moggie ak. Irok is the Member of Parliament from Kanowit. He is the President of Parti Bansa Dayak Sarawak (PBDS) which was formed in September, 1983 and he is the Federal Minister of Energy, Telecommunication and Multimedia. He was the State Minister for Local Government and Welfare Services from 1974-1979.



*Y.B. Datuk Amar Leo Moggie ak.
Irok.*



*Datuk Penghulu Francis Umpau ak.
Empam.*



Y.B. Datuk Gramong Juna.



Y.B. Encik Joseph Entulu Belaun.

- 2) Datuk Penghulu Francis Umpau ak Empam from Kanowit became the State Minister for Lands and Mineral Resources from 1.8.1963 to 6.7.1970.

3) Y.B. Datuk Gramong Juna is the Member of Council Negri from Ngemah. He is the State Assistant Minister of Rural Development and Land Development.

4) Y.B. Encik Joseph Entulu Belaun is the Member of Council Negri from Tamin and he is the State Assistant Minister of Youth and Sports.

d) Melanau Community

Melanau community was believed to be the earliest inhabitants in Sibiu District. There is a Melanau settlement at Kampung Nangka. Following the cession of Rajang area by the Brunei in 1853 and 1861, Melanau gave up their longhouse domicile gradually and built individual houses in the Kampung until today.

Nowadays, the Melanau population can be found in the Rajang delta region, Kanowit, Mukah, Dalat, Oya, Balingian, Belu and Tanjung in Sibiu Division.

The outstanding Melanau figures from Sibiu Division are as follows:-



Y.B. Datuk Dr. Leo Michael Toyad.



Datuk Pengiran Hipni Pengiran Anu.

- 1) Tun Datuk Patinggi Abang Haji Muhammad Salahuddin from Kampung Nangka, Sibul became the third Head of State of Sarawak from 1977 to 1981.
- 2) Y.B. Datuk Dr. Leo Michael Toyad who is the Member of Parliament from Mukah is the Federal Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs.
- 3) Datuk Pengiran Hipni Pengiran Anu from Mukah became the State Minister and Minister for Welfare from 1.8.1963 to 6.7.1970.

IX. RUMAH MALAYSIA

Although Sibul is historically a new place when compared with other areas in Sarawak, it has created a history when it became the venue for a meeting for the formation of first elected State Government of Sarawak.

The luxurious mansion of Tan Sri Datuk Amar Ling Beng Siew built in 1962 at No. 25, Upper Lanang Road, Sibul was declared by the Chief Minister of Sarawak, YAB Datuk

Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr.) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud as a historical site and named "Rumah Malaysia" during the State's 20th Merdeka Celebration in Malaysia in 1983.

It was in this very building that the State political leaders of various races in



Rumah Malaysia.

Sarawak such as the Chinese, the Ibans, the Malays, the Melanaus, the Orang Ulu, etc met at a crucial meeting in July 1963 to form the first elected Government of Sarawak.

X. MUKAH DISTRICT

(1) *Mukah in General*

Mukah Town is the administrative headquarters of Mukah District and it has one sub-district i.e. Balingian. The district has an area of 5,019 square kilometres. Based on 1871 Census, Mukah District had a population of 9,514. The majority of the population were the Melanaus (8,761) the Ibans (611), Chinese (119) and Indians (23). In the 1991 Census it had a population of 42,000, the majority of them are the Melanaus and the Ibans followed by the Chinese and the Malays. However, according to 1999 Mid-Year Population Estimate, the population of the district had increased up to 51,100. The Melanaus are found along the coastal areas of Mukah and Balingian whereas the Ibans are staying mostly in Selangau and Ulu Balingian areas. The Chinese who



The older part of Sibuan Town.



Sibuan Town along Batang Rajang.

are mostly Hokkien, Teochew and Foochow are concentrating themselves in Mukah Town, Balingian Bazaar and Selangau Bazaar. There are about 331 Kampung/Longhouses consisting of a total of 6,614 farm families in the district.

(2) *The Origin of the Name of Mukah*

Mukah is originally called "Muka" which means "face" because it derived from a legend sometime in the 14th century. When the first group of Melanaus reached the mouth of Mukah River by boats (in the olden days the river was known as Tellian River), they were weak and thirsty. However, they were saved by a beautiful lady who beckoned them to follow her. Once they reached a fresh water well, she disappeared behind the trees and was never appeared again. Not knowing her name but remembering her beautiful face, hence, the group named the place "Muka". Over the years, the word was adulterated through local pronunciation and hence, "Muka" became "Mukah" until today. The Melanaus first settled down in Kampung Boyan at Kuala Mukah. It was estimated that there were about one hundred houses in Kampung Boyan, but today the Kampung was no longer in existence and its original site is now used by the Sarawak Electricity Supply Power Station (SESCO).



*Mukah Town
along Jalan
Pasar.*

(3) *Historical Background*

Based on a map published in Italy in 1595, the word "Malano" was written along the coastal area where the rivers of Oya, Mukah and Balingian run. This might suggest that the Melanau community had settled down in these areas already. The Melanaus refer themselves as "A-Likou" meaning "people of the river". Generally, the Melanau in Mukah can be categorised into three sub-groups namely the Muslim, the Christian and the Pagan Melanau.

Before the coming of Islam around the 15th century, the Melanaus were

all Pagans and were ruled by their own chiefs. The most famous chief was the legendary Tugau, who lived in the Retus, a tributary of the Igan River. Tugau, harbouring under illusions of grandeur, one day decided to challenge the Brunei Sultanate and demanded tribute and submission from Sultan Mohammad. It was a foolhardy challenge.

The Melanaus were badly beaten in two decisive attacks and Brunei claimed its territory from the Tutong to the Igan as part of its empire. The Melanau chiefs were later replaced with Brunei Pengirans and a good deal of inter-marriages took place between the Brunei noblemen and the Melanau women. Their descendants are to be found in many of the Sarawak coastal areas to this day.



*Civic
Centre,
Mukah.*



*Balingian
Bazaar.*

(4) Hero of Melanau Community - Setia Raja

In the 19th century, the famous Melanau leader in Mukah was Pehin Orang Kaya Setia Raja Abang Manai bin Abang Dreman. He was a responsible leader who could protect his people from the enemy and solve the problems of his people. He was not only well

respected by his own community and even his enemy but also by the Brunei authority and the Brooke Regime. He was declared as one of the heroes in the State by the State Government of Sarawak on 27.7.1993. In order to remember him, a road each in Kuching, Miri and Mukah known as Jalan Setia Raja are named after the hero. In

*Setia Raja
Abang
Manai.*



Mukah, the RM7.2 million Boulevard and the RM4 million District Mosque are also named after Setia Raja.

(5) Mukah Town

Mukah first bazaar which was made of Attap was built by the Chinese traders at Kuala Mukah soon after Mukah area was ceded by the Sultan of Brunei to the White Rajah of Sarawak in 1861. A fort known as Fort Burdett which was named after James Brooke's good friend, Miss Burdett Coutts, was then built in Mukah. However, the Bazaar was burned down a few years later. Sometime in the late 1860s, Mukah Bazaar was rebuilt at the existing Mukah Old Town. In June, 1945, Mukah Bazaar was bombed by the

Allied Force in order to chase away the Japanese invaders in the area. The Bazaar was again completely gutted by the fire. However, a few years after the liberation, rows of double-storey wooden shophouses were built along the present Jalan Pasar, Mukah.

Today, Mukah has two towns. The old Mukah Town along Sungai Mukah consists of 22 units of 3-storey concrete shophouses of which 20 of them replaced the 20 wooden shophouses burnt down in 1990. There are another 10 units of 2-storey concrete shophouses and 40



*The
Landmark of
Mukah -
Ikan Merah.*

units of 2-storey. wooden shophouses totalling to 72 shophouses in the old town. The new Mukah Township which is three-quarter kilometre from the old town consists of 127 3-storey concrete modern shophouses. The Chinese Temple which has a history of more than 120 years old was rebuilt and declared open by the then Deputy Chief Minister of Sarawak Y.B. Tan Sri Datuk Amar Sim Kheng Hong on 14.5.1988. The Chinese Primary School known as Chong Boon was built a few years after the establishment of the old Mukah Town. The only Cinema in the town is Sieng Seng Theatre. The landmark of Mukah is Ikan Merah (Red Fish) which is found plentiful along Sungai Mukah and its coastal area. The local Melanau marinated raw fish called Unmai is the most popular delicacy in Mukah. There are 3 banking agencies, 6 small hotels and one private clinic in the old town whereas there are 2 banking agencies, one hotel and one private clinic in the new township. Besides, there are two resorts namely Mukah Kaul and Pantai Harmoni situated at 4th kilometre Jalan Mukah/Oya along the beach side. Both St.



Mukah New Township.



Raja Setia Mosque, Mukah.

Patrick Primary and Secondary Schools which were built in 1905 provide educational facilities in Mukah.

(6) Sago Industry

Even in the olden days, sago flour was one of the Mukah main products. The sago factories were built so that the locals could sell

*Sago logs in
Mukah.*



their sago logs for processing. The first sago factory was built in Mukah in 1880. It was made of bricks situated at the edge of the river in Mukah Town. In 1918, the factory was closed down when the price of sago flour dropped to low price. Today the square shaped, twenty metre high chimney is the only remain of the first sago flour factory in Mukah.

The sago processing and manufacturing industry in the coastal region of the Rajang Basin, as from the mid-1980's has entered



*The disused
sago furnace,
now a
landmark of
Mukah.*

an age of modernisation. It used to be a manually operated cottage industry, but now it is factory operated and fully mechanised. According to the management of Nitsei Sago Industries Sendirian Berhad in Mukah, the sago palm is a store of treasure and gold mine of the area. Every part of the palm - the leaves, barks, and siftings - is useful, and sago flour is getting more and more widely used as an ingredient in food and drug manufacturing industries. It is used as an ingredient in the manufacturing of a myriad of items, for example, granulated

sauce like the Ajinomoto, glucose, wine, vinegar, dark and light soya sauces, paper, starch, office glue, pills like Panadol, cakes, biscuits, rice noodles like Beehoon and Kuehtcow and dessert like pudding. With the assistance from Agriculture Department, Tabaloi industry is being set up at Kampung levels in Mukah. The most successful one was established at Kampung Tutus Hillir in 1990. Since then, the production of Tabaloi (well-known local snacks made from sago flour) is on the increase. Being a fishing town, Mukah is well-known for its fish crackers commonly known as Keropok. The Keropok making is a booming cottage industry in Mukah. Presently, in the international market, the demand is so great that at times a situation arises where demand is greater than production.

About 5,000 families living in the coastal region of the Mukah District are involved in the sago industry; most of them supply sago logs to the four main sago-flour processing factories in the area. Based on 1998 Mukah Agriculture Report, the small holders have planted 4,452 matured sago and 3,287 immatured sago in the district. In Mukah, Land Custody and Development Authority (LCDA) has planted sago palms in peat soil along Tanjung Telian, Petanak, Judan, Batang Mukah, Batang Balingian, Sungai Dijih,

Sungai Sebakong and Bukit areas. From 1988 to 1995, Mukah Sago Plantation (MSP) has planted a total area of 7,890 hectares of sago palms. Sebakong Sago Plantation (SSP) has planted 3,508 hectares of sago palms from 1995 to 1996 and a total of 6,500 hectares will be planted by the year 1999. The sago estates have created vast jobs opportunities for the locals.

(7) Mukah Today

Mukah Town is accessible by a 162 kilometre road from Sibul, by river and by air using Twin-Otter aircraft. Balingian, the only sub-district in Mukah, is 59 kilometres by road from Mukah Town and it has 20 double-storey wooden shophouses on silt. 1991 Census showed that Balingian Sub-district had a population of 17,217.

Lignitic coal deposit occurs in the coastal lowlands between Mukah River and Balingian River. Since 1975 until 1991, several companies conducted prospectings in the areas. The prospecting results estimated at about 270 million tonnes of coal exist in the Mukah/Balingian coal field. Small areas at Panareh and Nanga Lemai were also being prospected. Preliminary estimation indicated a reserve of 43.6 million tonnes and 8.3 million tonnes of coal deposit respectively. The use of

coal as a fuel will be most suitable for an on-site or near-site power generating station to provide electricity not only to Mukah district but also to the booming towns of Bintulu and Sibiu.

The industries like sago processing and manufacturing, timber and wood-based and oil palm have greatly improved the economy of the people in Mukah. The oil palm estate along Mukah/Selangau Road is planted in big scale by LKTS. The area is about 3,600 hectares and now it is in production. In Balingian, about 93 hectares are planted by FELCRA and 36 hectares are in production. Now, along the picturesque banks of the Mukah river, new houses have sprung up; Mukah is flourishing when a new township is being rapidly developed. More residential houses and housing estates are being built along the new township as well as along Mukah/Dalat Road. A Youth Camp which is situated at Sungai Petain is also completed to train the youths in the area. Besides, it has beautiful and tranquil beaches and friendly people staying in this small but beautiful town which is rich in its cultural heritages. Pesta Kaul (In Melanau dialect, "Pesta Kaul" means "coming together festival"), a Melanau traditional festival is celebrated in April each year as a ritual of purification, thanksgiving and propitiation for good fortune.

Dewan Suarah building incorporated the Melanau culture was built in Mukah at the cost of RM2.5 million. It was opened to the public on 25.7.1988. Dewan Sukan, an indoor stadium, was also built in 1996 to provide a venue for indoor sport and social activities in the town. Mukah is definitely developing especially in its sago industry and oil palm estates. It is one of the fastest rural developing towns in Sarawak.

XI. KANOWIT DISTRICT

1) General Information

Kanowit Town is the administrative headquarters of the Kanowit district. Based on 1991 Census, it had a population of 25,088 of which the majority of them are the Ibans followed by the Chinese, the Melanau and the Malays. In 1999, according to the Mid-Year Population Estimate, the population of the district had increased up to 29,000. Kanowit District has an area of 2,254 square kilometres. It has three small bazaars namely Ngemah Bazaar (9 shophouses), Nanga Dap (12 shophouses) and Machan Bazaar (15 shophouses).

2) How did Kanowit get her name.

According to Mr Frederick Boyle F.R.G.S. in his book "Adventures Among the Dyaks of Borneo" 1867, he pronounced "Kanowit" as "Kennowit". He described that

*The
Landmark
of Kanowit
- Iban
Duyong.*



"Kennowit" was actually the name of a small community who stayed around Kanowit area in the olden days. However, as time passed, more and more Ibans migrated to the area and, hence, intermarriage took place between the Kanowits and the Ibans. Slowly, being a minority race, the Kanowits were diminishing in numbers and eventually were absorbed into the Iban community. Although today the Kanowit community is no more in existence, the name "Kanowit" still

remains as the name of the district as well as Kanowit Town.

The name of Kanowit has another version. According to an oral tradition, the name "Kanowit" actually came from the English term "Cannot Wait". After Batang Rajang area was ceded to the Brooke authority by the Sultan of Brunei in 1861, a Brooke official came to Kanowit to name the area. When he arrived at the area, he could not wait but to ease himself after a long journey from downriver. He shouted at the Malay driver to stop the boat because he "cannot wait" any longer. After that, when he asked the driver what was the name of the place. Recalling what the Brooke's official shouted a moment ago, he answered, "Cannot Wait". Eventually, the place was known as "Cannot Wait" and later it was pronounced as "Kanowit" until today.



*Fort Emma
Kanowit.*

3) *Establishment of Kanowit Bazaar*

Kanowit was the first commercial centre in Batang Rajang Basin being established sometime in 1840s. According to Mr. Frederick Boyle, there were wooden shophouses built upon piles about 15 feet high with broad verendah in front by the Chinese Hokkien and the Malays along the river bank. However, the bazaar was gutted by fire in 1856. In the following year, the shopkeepers rebuilt the Kanowit Bazaar. In order to protect the shopkeepers from being attacked by the pirates and at the same time to establish the Brooke Regime's influence in the area after Brunei ceded the Lower Rajang area to the White Rajah, in 1853 Fort Emma was first built at Kanowit Bazaar. It was named after the mother of Rajah Charles Brooke. The fort was rebuilt along Jalan Kubu towards the end of year 1859.

In April, 1883 the Catholic Mission was transferred from Kapit to



*District Office
cum
Community
Hall
Kanowit.*



*Jalan Pekan,
Kanowit.*

Kanowit. Father Edmund Dunn and Father Keizer started a small school called St. Francis Xavier's School in Kanowit. The school was completed in 1886 at the cost of \$4,000/-, a large sum of money in those days.

In 1910, the Foochow settlement was extended from Sibü to Kanowit. Some Foochows became the shopkeepers while others ventured into rubber and pepper gardenings at Nanga Jih and Lian Hup Estate in Kanowit. Later on, Chinese Cantonese also came and settled down in the Kanowit area. On 9.11.1950, Kanowit Bazaar was completely gutted by fire. With the assistance from the Colonial Government of Sarawak, 58 concrete shophouses were built and completed within a few years.

4) Hero Sawing

Kanowit was famous in the olden days because it had produced a hero in the person of Sawing. Sawing was born in Kanowit in the early 19th Century. He was the great-great grandfather of Tua Kampung of Kampung Bedil, Lenya bin Jaro, a Melanau Rajang and a Christian. Sawing had a mix-blood of Ukit and Tanjung (Rajang). The hero hated the white men from overseas because they came to Sarawak, seized the land, imposed taxes and ruled over his people.

Sawing was the close comrade of Sherip Masahor, the then Governor of Sarikei who was also deadly against the foreign rule over his people. When Sir James Brooke took over the control of the whole of Batang Rajang basin in 1861, he



*Sawing,
Kanowit.*

tried to exercise his authority in Batang Rajang area. Sawing and his comrades, Skalai and Talip protected their strong fold at Kabah in Ulu Kanowit against the intruders. On 7.6.1859, Orang Ulu Hero Sawing and his followers attacked Fort Emma. The attack was also partly due to the fact that Sawing was a bachelor who fell in love with a Kanowit beautiful girl. The girl wanted Sawing to take a white man's head in order to prove his bravery. The Fort was completely burnt down by Sawing's force and Brooke's officials, Mr. Charles Fox and Mr. Henry Steele who were stationed at the fort was killed by Sawing. The heads of Mr. Fox and Mr. Steele were taken by our hero Sawing.

In July 1859 Charles Brooke organised an expedition of 3,000 men to counter-attack Sawing's force but he failed to penetrate the stronghold of Sawing at Kabah. Later on, Charles Brooke organised a second expedition with more men and weapons to attack Sawing. Although Sawing and his men fought bravely but they were outnumbered and was defeated with more than 100 of his followers being killed. His fort at Kabah was burned down. However, Sawing, Skalai and Talip did not surrender but they retreated safely to a Kayan longhouse in Belaga.

The Kayan Community hid our hero and his men and, at the same time, did not want to co-operate with the intruder. On 15.5.1863, Brooke's forces reached Pelagus Rapids. His force captured a few Kayans, burned down many longhouses and killed many innocent Kayans, but Sawing and his force still managed to escape from the enemy. In December, 1863 in order to avoid further bloodshed of the innocent Kayans and the destruction of their properties by the Brooke's force, Sawing surrendered himself to the intruder voluntarily, but Brooke had no mercy on our hero. Sawing was executed with a Kris. On 27.7.1993, Sawing was officially

declared as one of the heroes of Sarawak by the State Government and his relief figure has been portrayed in relief on a plaque around the base of the column of Heroes' Monument at the Sarawak Museum Garden, Kuching.

5) *Penghulu Asun's Revolt*

In 1931, Penghulu Asun led the Ibans of Kanowit, Entabai and Julau along Rajang River of Sibu Division in a revolt against the White Rajah and some young Ibans banded together to go head-hunting. The cause of the revolt was economic rather than tribal. Because of the World Economic Slump, the prices of rubber and jungle produce dropped and the Ibans could not pay their taxes. Besides, the government insisted on carrying out all regulations causing much discontentment among the people who blamed the government for their hardships, resulting in the revolt. Rajah Charles Vyner Brooke sent the Sarawak Rangers on an expedition to put down the revolt. Finally, in December 1932, Asun surrendered to the government but he was exiled to Lundu. In 1933, he migrated to Kuching where he died in 1958. Asun's revolt caused quite a great influence on the Ibans as he had a big group of Iban followers. In

order to prevent this rebellious influence from spreading, Rajah Charles Vyner Brooke, on 30.12.1931, had the native leaders assembled in front of the Sibn Resident's Office to pledge their royalty to the Brooke authority and they promised to maintain peace and harmony among themselves.

6) *Kanowit Today*

Today, Kanowit Town is a prosperous and peaceful place where multi-racial population are staying together harmoniously. Government agencies such as District Office cum Community Hall, Police Station, District Council, Library Building, etc and other basic facilities have been established along Jalan Wayang and Jalan Access in Kanowit Town to serve the people in the district. Besides riverine transport along Batang Rajang, Kanowit is also accessible by a 72-kilometre road from Sibn as well as Sarikei and Kuching. It is anticipated that upon the completion of the Durin Bridge in 2002, the development of Kanowit will be more intense because the area is more accessible from other parts of Sarawak to further spur its economic activities.

Based on a survey conducted in December, 1998, Kanowit Town has 81 units of shophouses. The details are as follows:-

<i>Shophouses</i>	<i>No. of units</i>
1) Double-storey concrete shophouses along Jalan Pekan	58 units
2) Double-storey concrete shophouses along Jalan Muhibbah	4 units
3) Three-storey concrete shophouses along Jalan Kubu	9 units
4) Three-storey concrete shophouses, along Jalan Access, near Bus Station and Kanowit Park	10 units
Total :	81 units

Besides the shophouses, the Chinese Temple, Hock Ann Teng Temple, which was registered with the Registrar of Societies on 6.8.1973 is situated at the side of Batang Rajang. The Chinese Primary School known as SRB Yee Ting which is almost as old as the Kanowit Town is established along Jalan Wayang. Kanowit Council Market is also built along Jalan Pekan to serve the people in the town. Kubu Emma which is situated along Jalan Kubu has become a tourist spot. In the town, there are two commercial banks and three medium size hotels to provide service to the people

there. There are 2 secondary schools, 37 primary schools, one government hospital and 6 rural clinics in Kanowit District. A section of the river bank in front of Kanowit Town has been constructed with retaining wall partly to stop the soil erosion but mainly to provide beautification and landscaping along the river bank. If the remaining part of the river bank between the mosque and the wharf along Jalan Kubu could be provided with the similar retaining wall, Kanowit Town will become more beautiful and more tidy rural town along Batang Rajang.

About 24,000 hectares from the projected 60,000 hectares of Native Customary Rights Land in Kelimut Kanowit District have now been developed by Land Custody and Development Authority (LCDA) and other commercial companies into large scale commercial oil palm estates since 19.8.1996. There are 1,453 local people from 85 longhouses participated in the oil palm scheme. The first harvest of 400 hectares of oil palm commenced on 19.8.1999. It is expected by the year 2007, about 320,000 tonnes of oil palm will be harvested bringing an expected revenue of RM80 million. Oil palm industry will definitely bring progress and raise the living

standard of the people of Kanowit District. Besides, a sugar cane commercial project has been established at Sungai Lukut with the assistance from Agriculture Department. An area of 35 hectares of land have been planted with sugar cane. The sugar canes are sold to Sibu and other nearby towns for sugar cane drinks. It is understood that the income from the sale of sugar canes for the farmers is quite high.

As a whole Kanowit is developing steadily and it is obvious that it is a district which "cannot wait" for development to come by itself but rather it is going after the development such as oil palm plantations, infrastructure projects and even sport stadium so that the people can enjoy the fruit of development earlier than expected. With the positive effort to transform Kanowit into a plantation district, it is expected that by the year 2000 Kanowit will be a better place to work and to live in.

XII. DALAT DISTRICT

1) Dalat in General

Dalat Bazaar is the administrative headquarters of Dalat District. Before 2.4.1973, Dalat was a sub-district of Mukah. However, after the former Third Division was

divided into three divisions, Dalat was upgraded as a district and now it has one sub-district namely Oya Sub-district with a population of 18,264 based on 1991 Census. Oya Bazaar which is 27 kilometres by road from Mukah has 18 double-storey wooden shophouses on stilts. Based on 1991 Census, Dalat District had a population of 21,609, the majority of them are the Melanaus, followed by the Chinese and the Ibans. However, according to 1999 Mid-Year Population Estimate, the population of the District was 25,900. Dalat District has an area of 2,217 square kilometres. Dalat Bazaar is 43 kilometres from Mukah Town by road.



Dalat Bazaar.



Oya Bazaar.

2) *How did Dalat and Oya get their names.*

According to an oral tradition, the name "Dalat" actually derived from the word "Lalat" which means housefly in Malay/ Melanau dialect. In the olden days, there were plenty of houseflies in Dalat area. Slowly the word "Lalat" was pronounced as "Dalat" or "Dalad" in Melanau language until today. The name "Oya" derived from Oya trees which are common in the sub-district.

3) *Dalat Bazaar*

Between 1862-1871, Chinese Hokkien from China came over to Dalat and Oya areas to do petty trading business. At first, they participated in sago business with the local Melanaus, slowly they

purchased rubber and sago flour from the locals for export. The Chinese Tuapekong Temple, Dalat was built in 1899. In 1905, the first Chinese Primary School was built in Dalat and in 1935, the new Primary School was constructed to replace the old one built 30 years ago. There were three rows of wooden shophouses in Dalat Bazaar. Christianity brought over to Dalat in the early 1900s by the Mill Hill Missionary priests. Although the majority of the Melanau community in Dalat are Muslims, there are about 30% of the Melanau who are the followers of Christian religion.

Dalat is a small Bazaar. On 25.7.1991 at 2.00 a.m., a big fire gutted two rows of 27 old shophouses and one cinema. It has only 11 old wooden shophouses and one Chinese Temple left at the Bazaar site. Hence, 27 temporary shophouses were erected at the back of the Dalat Bazaar. While waiting for the new Dalat Bazaar to be materialised, scattered houses at the back of Dalat Bazaar turn into temporary shophouses and one small hotel is also found in the residential area at the back of the Bazaar. The only bank, Bank



*District Office,
Dalat.*



*Integrated
Sport
Complex
Dalat.*

Utama, is located at the ground floor of District Office, Dalat.

4) Man-made Canal - Sungai Kut

The most famous man-made canal in Dalat is Sungai Kut. In the olden days, the Melanau called it Sungai Kikut (literally means a dug-out river) but somehow it is

known as Kut Canal today. The canal is probably the only navigable man-made passageway in Sarawak. The 10 kilometre long canal, built in the early 1900s by the legendary Melanau leaders called Jilang and his brother, connects Batang Igan and Batang Rajang for easier riverine communication in the area. In 1952, Public Works Department deepened the canal so that motorised crafts could pass through. Public Works Department maintained the canal until 1980 and it ceased maintaining the canal from that time onwards.

5) *Dalat Development*

The Melanau community in Dalat are mostly involving themselves in sago processing factories and fishing industry. In Dalat, Land Custody and Development Authority (LCDA) through Dalat Sago Plantation (DSP) has planted 1,600 hectares of sago palms at Mudan, Oya from 1993 to 1996. DSP will be expanded to 10,000 hectares and plantings to be completed by 2001. Based on Dalat District Agriculture Report 1998, there were 15,475 hectares of matured sago palms producing 18,600 tonnes of refined wet sago flour and 9,306 hectares of immatured sago palms in Dalat District. Dalat District has 1,100 hectares of land planted with oil palms. Coconut plantations about 120 hectares are found along the stretch of coastal sandy soil between Kampung Judan and Kampung Penat whereas hill padi cultivation concentrates along upper

parts of Batang Oya. Both Dalat and Oya are connected by road to Mukah, Bintulu and Sibul. There is also a road which links Dalat to Kampung Brunei, Kampung Baru and Kekan Sungai Kut. In 1996, a multi-million Ringgit of Integrated Sport Complex was constructed in Dalat and it has provided a venue of sport, games and even cultural activities in the district. Although, Dalat is a small district, it has all the basic necessary requirements of a big district.



*Mr. Lau
King Howe.*

XIII. LAU KING HOWE HOSPITAL MEMORIAL MUSEUM

The memorial museum was officially declared open by Tan Sri Datuk Patinggi Dr. Wong Soon Kai, the then Deputy Chief Minister of Sarawak on 3.8.1996.

Basically, the museum serves two purposes: one as an honour to Lau King Howe who founded the hospital and the other to display equipment used at the hospital before

*Lau King
Howe
Hospital.*



it ceased operation in 1994 with the opening of the new Sibu General Hospital on 1.9.1994.

Lau King Howe was the son of Rev. Lau Meng Shy. In 1916, he migrated from China to Sibu and managed a rubber plantation there. Lau King Howe was a kind hearted Christian who wanted to improve the medical service in Sibu. He donated all his properties to Sarawak Government for the establishment of a hospital in Sibu. On 22.11.1930 the Sarawak Government accepted the donation and named the hospital as Lau King Howe Hospital in honour of the donor. On 7.3.1931, he was awarded a medal by Sir Charles Vyner Brooke, the third White Rajah of Sarawak. After the award, Lau King Howe returned to China where he died in 1932.

XIV. SIBU TODAY

Today, among the towns in the Rajang Basin, the one with the most population and fastest development is Sibu. It is an important industrial port as well as a trading centre in Batang Rajang Basin. In Sibu District the population based on 1991 Census was 170,430. However, according to 1999 Mid-Year Population Estimate, the population of Sibu District had increased up to 208,2 00. Presently, the total population of the Sibu Rural District is more than 60,000

whereas the population of Sibu Municipality has 140,000. Because of the dense concentration of population and a flourishing economy, the face of Sibu is continually transformed and expanded into a bigger town.

In recent years, the basic public amenities and facilities of Sibu have been greatly



*Sibu
Waterfront.*

*Rajang Port
Authority
Building.*



*Sibu New
Market.*



improved. The new Port Authority Building, RM138 million Sibu New General Hospital, Kemryang Youth Camp and other government buildings were constructed one after another and are now fully operational. The road system which used to be less developed has also been widened and further improved. In order to solve the parking problem in the town, a 6-storey parking building was built by Sibu Municipal Council at the junction of Kampung

Nyabor Road and Wong Nai Siong Road. The building costing RM9.7 million with 374 parking lots was completed in 1993. In 1996, the hawkers' problem was solved with the completion of the new Central Market along Channel Road. Costing RM12 million, it provides 498 hawker stalls/lots for the hawkers to do their business in the town.

In the urban Sibu, the commercial corporate groups are developing at an amazing rate. Commercial complexes and classy hotels have sprung up one after another. The multi-storey Hock Hua Bank building which was completed in 1995 is one of the most magnificent buildings in Sibu. Wisma Sanyan, a 27-storey building costing RM200 million commenced its construction in March, 1996. Upon completion, it will be the highest building not only in Sibu but also in the whole of Sarawak. Because of its rapid growth, the present Sibu urban area is now over-crowded and must extend inland towards the Oya Road region. This will be the direction for the future expansion of Sibu. The establishment of a new township at Sibu Jaya, 25 kilometres from Sibu Town along Jalan Tunku Abdul Rahman is a good example of decentralisation of Sibu population. Upon full completion in 2003, Sibu Jaya new township containing an area of 1,200 acres will be a model estate for a peaceful and comfortable place for

Hock Hua Bank New Building.



the people to live in. The birth of Sibu Jaya is to facilitate the future expansion of growth of Sibu Town. The concept of the creation of the twin township, Sibu and Sibu Jaya, is to draw away the population from the congested town of Sibu to a new township with proper planning and healthy environment. Another new direction of future urban development is the old airport site where the new Sibu Municipal Council Building estimated to cost RM30 million, a new fire station, RM10 million Tun Ahmad Zaidi Stadium which can accommodate some 14,500 spectators and many other government agencies will be properly planned and built. At the moment, the new Federal Complex has been built near Sungai Merah area. Moreover, another indoor stadium costing RM5 million will be built at Bukit Lama by the year 2000. In



Wisma Sanyan, a 27-storeys building, is under construction in Sibu. When completed, it will be the highest building in Sarawak.

1998, a sum of RM20 million for Phase I of the 11-hectare Sibu Town Square project had been allocated. Upon completion in early 21st Century, it will become the biggest town square in Sarawak. The new RM120 million Sibu airport about 25 kilometres along Jalan Tunku Abdul Rahman, Sibu was declared open for operation on 31.5.1994. Since then, Boeing planes can land at Sibu Airport bringing more people to and from Kuching as well as Kuala Lumpur and Kota Kinabalu. The installation of two units of aerobridges costing RM9 million at Sibu Airport is expected to be completed in April 2000 so that better service can be provided to airport users.



The new Sibu Airport about 25 km from Sibu town.



A section of Bukit Aup Jubilee Park, Sibu.

In order to provide a big town hall and a centre for the study and research on the ethnic cultures of all the races living in the Rajang Basin, the building of Civic Centre Sibu costing RM8 million was built and opened to members of the public on 4.7.1988. In 1996, the United

College Sarawak (UCS) was set up to address the pressing need for providing local students certain type of professional courses at affordable fees. The college can accommodate 1,200 students. Later, Kolej Damansara Utama was established in Sibu and, hence, these colleges have made Sibu a centre of education excellence in Central Sarawak. The Jubilee Park at Aup becomes a favourite place to relax and unwind since its opening in March 1993. The project which was implemented in

two phases was fully completed in July 1996 at the total cost of RM17 million. The park covers more than 9 hectares of the land and it includes an observation tower, pavilion, landscaped garden, lagoon and barbecue areas. This is the place where majority of



*Sibu
commercial
area.*

the Sibu populace spend their leisure time. In 1988, RM1 Million Rajang Esplanade was completed and the Mission Mini Park was also built at the cost of RM480,000/-. In 1998, the construction of Bukit Lima Recreational Park was completed at the cost of RM618,000/-. All these projects are undertaken by Sibu Municipal Council to provide more recreational and green areas to Sibu Town.

Presently, many corporate groups are building complexes and housing estates in Sibu. Unlike the private companies of the past, these corporate groups have a sound organization with a capable board of

managing directors and their continual development and expansion can be expected. Before the end of 20th Century, Sibu will have the highest building in Sarawak and by the turn of next century, the town will have the biggest Town Square in the state. Besides, the longest bridge in the State known as the Durin Bridge is under construction across Batang Rajang near Sibu and it is expected to be completed in the year 2002. Costing more than RM150 million, the 1.5-kilometre bridge will complete the missing link along the Pan Borneo Highway. Upon completion, it will definitely bring progress and faster

development to Sibü and its surrounding areas. By then, Sibü will have all the qualities to qualify itself to be a city in the central region of Sarawak. With the close cooperation between

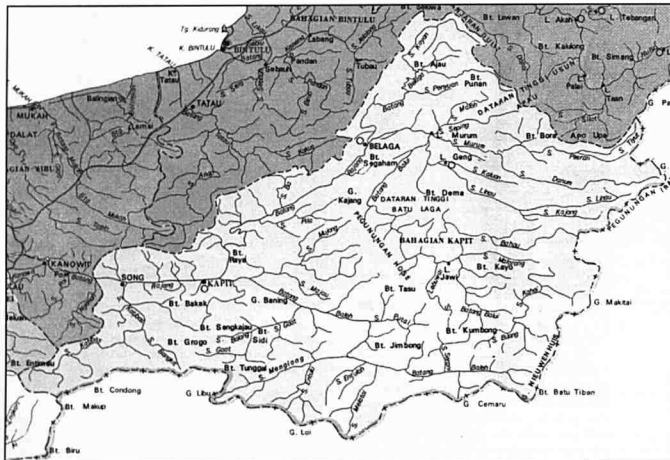
the private sectors and the government agencies, Sibü City is in the making. It is obvious and certain that Sibü will become a Garden City in 2005 as scheduled.



Sibü Jaya New Township

KAPIT DIVISION

Map of Kapit Division



Kapit - The Town of Natural Resources

I. INTRODUCTION

Kapit Division, the Seventh Division of Sarawak, has an area of 38,934 square kilometres and based on 1991 census, it had a population of 96,256. However, according to 1999 Mid-Year Population Estimate, the Division had a population of 122,300. It stands as the largest division in Sarawak with about three-tenth of the total area of the state. The Division is made up of undulating hills and mountains covered by virgin jungles and secondary forests. The land mass is drained by Batang Rajang, the longest river in Sarawak and its many tributaries are Batang Balleh, Batang Katibas, Batang Balui and Sungai Belaga. About 10% of the land is suitable for agricultural use and 89.7% is under Class 5 and 05 soil which are unsuitable for agriculture activities. Shifting cultivation of hill padi is still predominant.

However, the adoption of improved technology and management practices introduced by the Agriculture Department has gradually been accepted by the farmers.

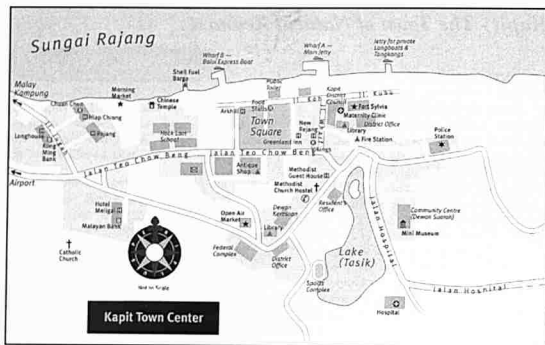
The rivers in the Division produce the state fish called "Ikan Semah" and other popular fresh water fish like "Tengadak" and "Empurau". Settlements are mainly in the form of longhouses, except for towns/bazaars of Kapit, Song, Belaga and one Malay Kampung each in the three District Headquarters, all dotted along the rivers. There are about 490 main settlements all along the rivers, only a few longhouses are about a kilometre away from the river.

Kapit Division has three districts and one sub district namely:-

<i>District</i>	<i>Sub-district</i>	<i>Population (1991 Census)</i>
1) Kapit District	1) Nanga Merit	55,759
2) Song District		17,937
3) Belaga District		22,569

	Total:	96,265

Locality map
of Kapit
Town.



Kapit is an interior division and, hence, it has only 1 town and 7 bazaars namely:-

- 1) Kapit Town
- 2) Song Bazaar
- 3) Belaga Bazaar
- 4) Nanga Merit Bazaar
- 5) Pelagus Rapid Bazaar
- 6) Giam Pasang Bazaar
- 7) Bakun Bazaar
- 8) Nanga Gaat Bazaar

II. ORIGIN OF THE NAME OF KAPIT

There are two versions as to how Kapit got her name.

Version 1

In the olden days before the establishment of Kapit Town, there were some Iban bamboo longhouses sited along Sungai Kapit. The wall and the floor of the longhouses were made of split bamboo-sheets tied together. Whenever the local people wanted to go to the area, they would say, "Kami ngagai Rumah Panjai Kapit" (in Iban language) which means "we go to Kapit (split bamboo-sheets) longhouse". Eventually, the place was called "Kapit" and slowly it was pronounced as "Kapit" until today.



*District
Office
Kapit.*

Version II

Another story revealed that the name "Kapit" actually derived from the words "Keep it".

It happened that after Batang Rajang area was annexed to Sarawak in 1861, a Brooke's official arrived at Kapit by longboat. He was feeling hungry after a long journey and so he gave some money to his Malay driver and asked him to buy some food for him. When the driver returned with the food, he handed over the food parcel and the balance of money to the Brooke's official. Since the driver had provided excellent service to him, he asked the

driver to keep the change, i.e. "keep it". Later on, the official asked the driver what was the name of the place. The driver simply answered, "keep it" and eventually it was pronounced as "Kapit" until today.

III. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

(1) The Birth of Kapit Division

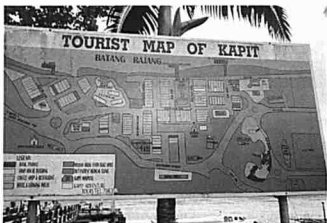
There was an evidence to prove that Kapit Division was inhabited by human beings for quite a long time. The Sarawak Museum found seventy-nine quadrangular adzes at an open site at the junction between Sungai Putai and Ulu

Balleh above Kapit in association with many locally made soft pottery, several chert and agate spear-heads, stone bark beater, brass earings and bangles as well as iron spears and knives.

Kapit Division was a District of the former Third Division which was defined in Sarawak Constitution on 1.6.1873. The Division was enlarged by the addition on 27.6.1882 of Baram River and territory south to Tanjung Kedurong which was ceded to Sarawak by the Sultan of Brunei on 13.6.1882. This area was later removed on 28.7.1885 to form, with Trusan River, the newly constituted Fourth Division, and Third Division was redefined as originally "from Rajang River to Tanjung Kedurong". At the Council Negri meeting on 16.10.1924, the White Rajah announced the constitution of a "Coast Division", embracing the area between Tanjung Kedurong and Igan River, leaving Third Division restricted to the great Rajang River and its tributaries.



Trumpet Flower - Official Flower of Kapit.



Tourist Map of Kapit.

The Coast Division was, however, abolished by a notification in the Government Gazette dated 3.1.1928 and Third Division was extended to embrace the territory which lies between the mouth of Igan River and Sarikei River. On 2.4.1973, Third Division was



*Aerial view
of Kapit
town with
Civic Centre
at the front
ground.*



*Meligai
Hotel
Building.*

again divided into three divisions namely Third Division, Sixth Division and Seventh Division. By the Administrative Areas Order 1987, all the Divisions were renamed after the divisional headquarters. Hence since January 1987, Seventh Division is known as Kapit Division. Encik Pancras Eddy was appointed as the first Resident of Kapit Division from 2.4.1973 to 20.3.1978.



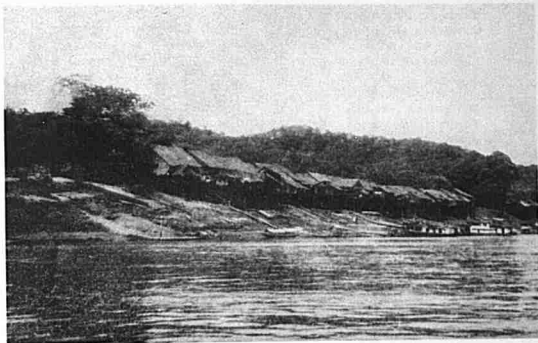
Kapit in the early 1900s. Only Fort Sylvia is in the picture.

2) Kapit Town

Around 1880 Chinese Hokkien came from China and settled down in Kapit for general trading. After Fort Sylvia was built in Kapit in 1880, more and more Chinese Hokkien settled down in Kapit. According to the Sarawak Gazette of 1.3.1888, 7 new wooden shophouses were built in Kapit in addition to the existing 18 shophouses built earlier. At that time the population of Kapit Bazaar and its surrounding areas was about 300 of which 200 were Chinese Hokkien and 100 were the Malays. In 1881, the Chinese

Tuapekong Temple was established at the present site and in 1929, Hock Nam Chinese Primary School was built to cater the school children not only from Kapit itself but also from Song and Belaga areas.

During second World War, Japanese troops occupied Kapit Town from 1941 to 1945. The Allied Force attacked the Japanese Force at Kapit in June 1945 and as a result of it, all the wooden shophouses were bombed and destroyed. After the Allied Force recaptured Kapit on 24.6.1945, temporary Attap shophouses were rebuilt for



*Kapit Town
in 1946.*

business. In 1950, 42 modern wooden shophouses were constructed. From 1969 onwards, Council new market, new Federal Complex, Resident's Office, District Office, Police Station, General Hospital, Radio Television Station and a secondary school were built in order to provide a better service to the people in Kapit Town.

(3) Fort Sylvia and Nanga Balleh Fort

Built in 1880, Fort Sylvia remains to this day as an important historical

building. The construction of the fort started in 1878 and it was completed two years later at a cost of \$3,000/-. The fort was known as Fort Sylvia in 1925 in honour of Raneé Sylvia, wife of the third White Rajah, Sir Charles Vyner Brooke.

The idea of establishing a fort in this area was mooted out because of the White Rajah's growing concern over the migration of the Ibans into this majestic river of Batang Rajang. The Ibans who migrated to Batang Rajang had

already established themselves at Sarikei, around Sibu and along Kanowit River as well as its tributaries, the Poi and Ngemah branches of Batang Rajang. The migration process continued on into Katibas River, another major tributary of Batang Rajang. The migrants who settled in Katibas River composed mainly of the Batang Lupar Ibans. The migration from Batang Lupar was via the Embaloh (Kanyau) a tributary of Kapuas River in the Indonesian Borneo thence to the headwaters of Katibas River.

The migration to Katibas River subsequently led to the emergence of the Ibans in Batang Rajang and Balleh River which later prompted the White Rajah to establish a fort in the Upper Rajang. He realised that the situations in the Upper Rajang could not be effectively administered from Fort Emma which he established at Kanowit in 1859.

Batang Rajang was sparsely settled and Balleh River was virtually uninhabited, affording a great expanse of virgin territory and a shifting cultivators' paradise which



*Kapit town
in 1960s.*

was most desirable to the eyes of the potential immigrants. The White Rajah knew that, once the Ibans were well established in their new land, it would be impossible to keep them from raiding and headhunting against their scattered neighbours. He could therefore not afford to allow such migration and the warlike activities of the Ibans in the Balleh area.

Adventurous as they were, the Ibans disclaimed the White Rajah's sovereignty through open protests because the sort of restrictions imposed by the White Rajah was amounting to depriving them of their rights and their way of life, as against the autonomous existence they had enjoyed under the Sultan of Brunei. By 1874, despite the prohibitions and measures taken by

the White Rajah, the migration from Katibas River had spread to Batang Rajang and as far upstream as the mouth of Mujong River in Balleh. A fort was then established at the confluence of Balleh River and Batang Rajang and it was completed in 1875. Pending the completion of the fort, a steam boat was stationed at the spot supposedly for the triple purposes of preventing the advance of boats on warpath, of affording protection to the party working at the fort and of obstructing the inflow of the Batang Rajang Ibans into Balleh River. However, almost immediately the steamer was there, fleets of Iban warboats were seen entering Balleh River. Despite shots being fired from the steamer, the Ibans did not turn back. The firings only angered the Ibans who became more defiant. They wilfully ignored the government activities which took place at Nanga Balleh.

Neither the steamer nor the fort succeeded in stopping the migration or the accompanying warlike activities. The fort at Nanga Balleh had a short history because a few years later it was abandoned and dismantled. The construction of a new fort at Kapit commenced in

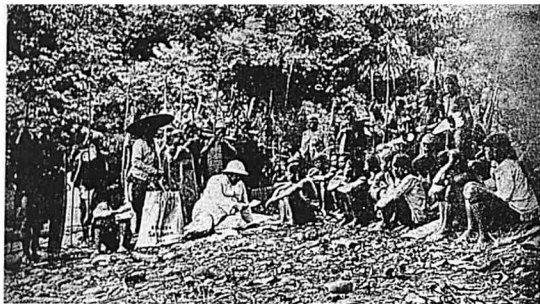


*Fort Sylvia,
Kapit.*

1879 and it was completed in 1880. Resident of Third Division Mr. Hugh Low accounted for the reason which led to the moving of the fort from Nanga Balleh to Kapit as follows:-

"The fort had been moved from Nanga Balleh to Kapit in 1879, after Rajah Charles Brooke had nearly drowned at the former site in 1877 when his steamer "Ghita" was swept against the river bank by the dangerous currents which prevail there".

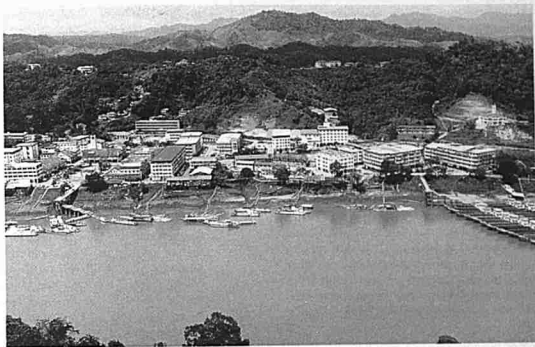
When the fort was moved to Kapit in 1879, the affairs in Upper Rajang particularly in the Balleh area were most crucial. By 1880, the year of its completion, the increasingly defiant headhunting evolved into open Anti-Rajah Movement. In protest to the White Rajah's government, the dissident Ibans retreated to Bukit Batu, a limestone crag at the



*War
Council on
Bukit Batu
Expedition
in 1881.*

headwaters of the Mujong a tributary of Balleh River. The White Rajah had to conduct punitive expeditions against these fighters. The first Bukit Batu expedition was carried out on 9.2.1881 and the second one was organised on 6.7.1881. The Anti-Rajah fighters withstood the two expeditions but later, in the same year, they submitted themselves to the White Rajah. At least during that era, with the surrender of the Balleh fighters, Rajah Charles Brooke was able to contain the notorious Balleh immigrants by resettling them in Batang Rajang below the Fort Sylvia at Kapit. Balleh River was then closed down for further settlement.

Extravagantly built from Belian timbers, the workmanship and finishing touches of the building were comparatively crude and rough by modern carpentry standards. The tough and thick Belian walling of the Fort Sylvia in those days was obviously meant to withstand possible attacks by the Anti-Rajah fighters. The bird's eye holes on the wall around the building afforded the fortmen the advantage of seeing from inside without being noticed from the outside in times of attacks. From the holes they could also shoot the invaders. Like most forts, it was constructed on contribution basis. The local people whom the White Rajah had won over to recognise



*Aerial view
of Kapit
Town in
1990s.*

his sovereignty contributed the assorted timbers. With a handful of "Loyalists" and meagre construction implements and materials, Fort Sylvia was constructed. Wonderfully the building remains to this day and is amongst the few oldest fine government buildings to be preserved.

IV. ADMINISTRATION AND BROOKE'S OFFICERS

During the reign of Sir James Brooke (1841-1868) and Sir Charles Brooke (1868-1917) there were no formally constituted

Districts within the Divisions and the term "District Officer" was unknown. It was only after 1920, during the reign of Sir Charles Vyner Brooke (1917-1941; 1945-1946) that "Districts" were formally designated within the Divisions and District Officers were appointed.

The most well-known officer to have served in Kapit in the olden days was undoubtedly Domingo de Rozario (popularly known as Mingo), whose father was a Portuguese chef in the service of Sir James Brooke. Rozario was born at the Astana's kitchen in Kuching and served the Brooke Government from 1880 to 1911.

In the early days, the entire government service in the Upper Rajang consisted of Domingo de Rozario, assisted by one or two Malay Native Officers and a handful of untrained, locally recruited 'fortmen'. The Resident of the Division normally remained in Sibu and visited Kapit occasionally. It was a minimal administration even by Brooke standards. For more than 30 years, De Rozario was in sole officer-in-charge of the Fort first located at Nanga Balleh and later moved to Kapit except for very brief periods in 1905 and 1909 when cadet officers J.K. Caldecot and F.A.W. Page-Turner were posted there respectively. In those days, De Rozario could only watch helplessly as Iban war parties returned from successful attacks on the other tribal groups. It was evident that the Brooke's government was powerless for many years even after the establishment of Fort Sylvia in Kapit in 1800.

V. IBAN MIGRATION AND PEACE MAKING

(1) *Migration to Balleh*

Migrations into Balleh River and part of Rajang Basin covering the area between Belaga and Song took place overland between one river and another. The migrants would take four or five days' move, then build their houses, and proceed to farm for one or two years, after which they would continue their migration until they arrived at their final destination.

Iban began migrating into Balleh area well before the Brooke's arrival

in about 1800 A.D. Their movement was only one facet of a rigorous expansion of population outwards from Upper Batang Lupar, which also resulted in the settlement of adjacent areas of the present Kalimantan, Indonesia. These areas included portions of the Kanyau (Embaloh) and Laboyan tributaries of Kapuas River as well as the region north of Kapuas Lakes.

The earliest route from Upper Batang Lupar into Batang Rajang drainage lies between the Kanyau (Embaloh) branch of Kapuas River, and the headwaters of Katibas branch of Batang Rajang. It is the route which travellers between the two areas have always followed when conditions permitted and it was by this route that Batang Lupar Ibans came to settle in Katibas River, a tributary of Batang Rajang. In 1874, Iban migration moved into Upper Batang Rajang. Longhouse communities existed as far up-stream as the mouth of Mujong River and individual families were farming well beyond that point.

By 1887 because of the increasing pressure from the intending immigrants, the White Rajah had to give way and allowed them to settle along Batang Rajang and its tributaries up to the Pelagus rapids. The tributaries include Sungai Amang, Sungai Aya, Sungai Encheremin, Sungai Mela and Sungai Pelagus.

(2) *Kapit Peace Making Ceremony 1893
between the Ibans of Rajang and
Batang Lupar*

In 1893 inter-tribal feuds broke out, fostered by the upriver Ibans of Batang Rajang and Batang Lupar, the latter being led by a remarkable adventurer called Bantin who was aided by Ngumbang. In the following years the White Rajah mounted several expeditions against Bantin and Ngumbang who, eventually in 1907, agreed to attend a peace-meeting at Kapit, where in the presence of Rajah Charles Brooke and all the "Ulu Ai" Ibans agreed to end their feuds with the Ibans of Batang Lupar.

The meeting at Kapit where Bantin and many hundred Ibans who had been disaffected towards Government and the lower tribes for some years past took place on 16.5.1907 before Rajah Charles Brooke and Dr. Charles Hose, Resident Third Division, when everything passed off satisfactorily.

After a pig killing ceremony in which Bantin and his "Ulu Ai" followers swore eternal friendship with Munan and the downriver tribes, about a thousand Ibans proceeded to Fort Sylvia where the great "Aum" or meeting was held.

The pig killing ceremony produced a considerable amount

of ease and contentment where before a certain feeling of nervousness was shown in the bearing of Bantin and his followers, so much so that they would not leave their Parangs or spears. In the assembly, however, at Fort Sylvia no arms were seen nor were there the slightest signs of trepidation.

Bantin assured the White Rajah of his good intentions for the future and spoke feelingly and convincingly. In token of his goodwill Bantin presented his spear adorned with the long hair of his late enemies to the White Rajah with this remark "that as he was now a friend the spear was of no further use to him and no longer sharp".

Certain arrangements were made about the payment of a fine which would be eventually paid to those in the Batang Lupar who had suffered from Bantin's attack. Bantin and his "Ulu Ai" followers proceeded to Batang Lupar to make peace in Simanggang District. Great satisfaction between all parties seemed to be the result of the peace-making.

(3) *Upper Rajang Settlements and
Expeditions*

The Balleh was still prohibited for settlement. However, in 1895 despite the prohibition, the settlers fought

their way by trekking up the course of Kapit River, below Fort Sylvia, and from thence across through Pelajau and Antaroh to Sut River, the lower tributary of Balleh River. In this way they artfully avoided the Brooke authority stationed at Fort Sylvia.

In 1902 the affairs of the Upper Rajang became more and more fluid with the news of Bantim's Anti-Rajah Movement in the Upper Rajang. The Anti-Rajah Movement stimulated a spirit of restlessness amongst the related Ibans in the Upper Rajang. As usual, defiance of government authority took the form of increasingly overt migration combined with headhunting. During the last quarter of the year 1902, an Iban leader named Ayum brought his followers to Bukit Batu, where the Anti-Rajah fighters of 1880 had made their stand in order to resist the White Rajah's authority. It took a good deal of negotiations before Ayum and his followers were persuaded to leave Bukit Batu and the hostile activities terminated. Bukit Batu had become a symbol of resistance to the White Rajah's government. Another show of resistance to the White Rajah's administration was the congregation of people at the same place in 1904, led by Janting. The combined force



Kapit Town Square.



Cultural heritage in Kapit Town.

of the Kayans and Ibans led by Resident Dr. Charles Hose compelled Janting and his followers to move downstream in July 1904.

Balleh was officially allowed for settlement in 1906 after Rajah Charles Brooke met the Iban leaders of the Upper Rajang. There were already settlements in Balleh, notably the group led by Penghulu Merum in 1905 and those trekking over to Sut River in 1895. Merum and his followers migrated when Rajah Charles Brooke was away on leave. The Rajah Muda who administered the government in the Rajah's absence firmly held that Merum and his followers should be punished severely. Similarly, Resident Ivon Kirkpatrick who took over from Dr. Charles Hose at that time would like Balleh to remain unsettled. However, when Rajah Charles Brooke returned from leave he did not sanction the expedition against the Balleh migrants. Instead he gave his blessing to what Penghulu Merum had done by making an order that only Balleh Proper up to the mouth of Nanga Ga'at be opened to settlers. The tributaries of the Balleh were still prohibited for settlement. In return for allowing settlements in the main Balleh River, the White Rajah obtained the agreement of the Balleh Ibans to launch attacks on the fighters associated with Bantin in the Poi, Kanowit and the Upper Batang Lupar Rivers. It was perhaps because of the Bantin's Anti-Rajah

Movement and related reactions in other predominantly Iban areas that the White Rajah had to relax his restriction on the settlements of Balleh. He might have foreseen that it was the best bargain to calm the Upper Rajang Iban and an opportunity to impose on them to assist in the fights against the widespread insurgents. He had to bow to the inevitable, knowing that the prohibition would be ultimately unenforceable.

The relaxation of Balleh for settlement had done much more nuisance than good to the Brooke's administration in the Upper Rajang. In later years, Penghulu Merum and others overtly offended the White Rajah by leading the migration into the prohibited Ga'at and Mujong Rivers. It was then not the shortage of farming lands which accounted for the migration as their movement in Balleh had gone far beyond an enormous area of virgin jungle which could easily sustain the system of shifting cultivation for many more years to come. It was culminated from the desire for adventure of going into a fresh territory for possible headhunting activities. The small bands of Punan Batu were said to be wandering the headwaters of Mujong River. There were the nomadic Ukits and possibly the

Bukitans in the Upper Balleh. These small groups of nomadic people afforded attractive head hunting spree to the Ibans who were intoxicated with the desire for raidings and conquests.

The Balleh affairs later developed into flagrant raidings against various people including the Kenyahs living in the Indonesian Borneo. The most obvious of such raids was made on Uma Sulang Kayan in the Mahakam River in 1913. The Dutch authorities made protests to the Sarawak Government. Embarrassed by the activities of his subjects, the White Rajah could no longer be patient but to take stern actions on the offenders. Despite severe counter-measures by the White Rajah, Penghulu Merum and other Balleh Ibans retreated to the headwaters of Muijong River in 1914 in open revolt against White Men's rule. They had their hide-out at the summit of Salong Mountain.

The White Rajah launched the Ga'at expedition in February 1915 to punish the Ibans for the misdeeds they had done to those they raided and for stubbornly ignoring his authorities. In May 1915 he sent a detachment of Sarawak Rangers for expedition to Muijong River to attack Penghulu Merum and his followers at the Salong Mountain. With the help of a cannon, the

Rajah's force overpowered the supposedly impregnable Bukit Salong and defeated Penghulu Merum and his followers. Merum was then stripped off his Penghuluship for going obstinately against the White Rajah.

As a result of the two expeditions, most of the defeated Balleh Ibans at Salong Mountain moved down to the main Batang Rajang and the band of die-hard fighters of Ga'at retreated to the headwaters of the Ga'at and continued to cause troubles by raiding across the Second and Third Divisions. In April 1916, the Ga'at warboats were proceeding to raid the upstream Melanau of Batang Rajang. It was a daring move because from Ga'at they had to follow the Balleh River before they could get up Batang Rajang. The confluence of Balleh River and Batang Rajang is just half an hour journey by longboat from Kapit Sylvia Fort. Their warboats were attacked in what was known as the battle of Nanga Pila in which an estimate of two hundred Iban fighters were killed. The Brooke's forces suffered no casualty.

The massacre at Nanga Pila did not deter the spirit of the remaining fighters. The hostile stronghold at the headwaters of the Ga'at was still resistant and a menace to the White Rajah who was eager to see peace

*The Historic
Peace-making
Ceremony between
the Kayan,
Kenyah and Iban
tribes held in
Kapit on
16. 11. 1924.
The native tribal
leaders
slaughtered the
pigs, as a sign
of their
determination to
maintain peace.*



between the Ibans of the Rajang River and its tributaries in Sarawak together with the Kayans, Kenyahs and Kajangs of Apoh Kayan and the Baloï River in Indonesia Borneo. The Iban Chief, Penghulu Koh ak Jubang, of the Rajang Ibans in Sarawak led a party of 4,200 Ibans and the leader from the Indonesia Borneo tribes, Taman Kila, brought a group of 960 warriors in 97 boats to come to meet in

for the Upper Rajang. In early 1919 after the death of Charles Brooke, his son Tuan Muda Betram led the second Ga'at expedition to attack the Ga'at people. This time machine guns were used. The last fighters retreated across the border to Indonesian Borneo but later were rounded up and were repatriated to Sarawak. With the suppression of Ga'at Anti-Rajang Movement, Fort Sylvia eventually experienced peace for the first time of its existence.

**(4) Kapit Peace Making Ceremony 1924
between the Orang Ulu & the Ibans**

On 16.11.1924, the greatest and most significant peace-making ceremony in the history of Sarawak was witnessed by the third White Rajah, Sir Charles Vyner Brooke in Kapit. There had been enmity



*The
Commemorative
Plaque in front
of Fort Sylvia
marking
the 70th
Anniversary of
the historic
Peace-making
Ceremony.*



*Temenggong Koh Anak Jubang
(1870-1956)*



*Tun Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri
Temenggong Jugah Anak Barieng*



*Datuk Amar (Dr.) Leonard Linggi
Jugah*

Kapit. As this involved the people of Sarawak and the people of Dutch East Indies, the third White Rajah of Sarawak and Captain A.F. Molenaar of the Royal Dutch Colonial Light Infantry together with his Civil Controller of the Apoh Kayan were present as witnesses to this historic peace-making ceremony in Kapit. This unprecedented peace-making not only removed the enmity and war between the tribes but also brought about the ever lasting peace to the Rajang Basin. In appreciation of his services in connection with this peace-making, Penghulu Koh ak Jubang was promoted to the rank of Temenggong. Temenggong Koh was highly respected by the Iban community and he had been very active in the Sarawak political arena for several decades until his death on 4.11.1956. On 25.11.1994,

the Deputy Chief Minister of Sarawak Tan Sri Datuk Amar Alfred Jabu ak Numpang, officiated at a grand assembly at Fort Sylvia in Kapit to commemorate the peace-making ceremony of 1924 between the Iban and the Orang Ulu communities.

VI. WELL-KNOWN IBAN LEADERS IN KAPIT

The well-known Iban leaders from Kapit Divisions are as follows:-

- 1) Temenggong Koh ak Jubang (1870-1956) from Katibas, Song was the Paramount Chief of the Ibans of Kapit Division and a member of Sarawak Legislative Council. He passed away in his longhouse at Katibas, Song on 4.11.1956 at the age of 86. A road in Kapit Town is named after him.

- 2) Tun Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Temenggong Jugah ak Barieng (1900-1981). He was the founder of the Party PESAKA (Parti Pesaka Anak Sarawak) and in 1973, he led Party Pesaka and Party Bumiputera to merge and became Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu (PBB). He became the Federal Minister for Sarawak Affairs from 1963-1974. He passed away in Kuching on 8.7.1981 at the age of 81. A road in Kapit Town and a road in Kuching City are named after this Iban great man. Another road in Kapit Town known as Jalan Puan Sri Tiong is named after his wife.



Y.B. Dato Dr. James Jemut Masing.



Datuk Tajang Laing.

- 3) Datuk Amar (Dr.) Leonard Linggi Jugah, a lawyer and successful businessman from Kapit, was the State Minister with Special Functions from 7.7.1970 to 9.9.1974. He is the Chairman of Tun Jugah Foundation.
- 4) Y.B. Dato Dr. James Jemut Masing who is the Council Negri Member from Balleh is the State Minister of Tourism. He is one of the founders and Vice-President of Parti Bansa Dayak Sarawak. (PBDS)

VII. OTHER RACIAL COMMUNITIES IN KAPIT

(1) *Orang Ulu Community*

These groups are found in Upper Rajang and Balui area in Kapit Division. The Penans are semi-nomadic living in the remote upper reaches of Balui and its tributaries. The Kayan and Kenyah though quite distinct, are often found in association with each other and live in the regions of the middle and the upper reaches of the main rivers in Sarawak and Kalimantan, Indonesia. The Orang Ulu groups are primarily subsistent farmers, planting hill rice, rubber and other cash crops.

The Kenyah, Kayan, Kajang and other related minority groups are most skillful and decorative carvers in Sarawak, producing a wide

*Datuk Nyipa
Bato.*



variety of beautiful wood carving from huge burial structures to small car-pendants made of hornbill ivory. They are also well-known for building strong and solid longhouses as well as long boats. The Kenyahs carve traditional wooden masks which are used in their harvest ceremony. The most common form in these people's carving is the 'aso' motif, a dragon-like dog with long s nout-curling fangs and sets of long horns.

In Kapit Division, there are two famous Orang Ulu leaders namely Datuk Tajang Laing and Datuk Nyipa Bato. Datuk Tajang Laing was the State Minister from 22.7.1963 to 7.9.1966 and State Minister for Agriculture and

Forestry from 24.9.1966 to 6.7.1970. Datuk Nyipa Bato was the State Minister from 7.7.1970 to 9.9.1974 and the State Minister for Welfare Services from 9.9.1974 to 23.9.1979.

(2) Malay Community

The Malays, the minority group, first started to set foot in Kapit in the 1880's. They consisted of farmers and traders. Because of the existence of Fort Sylvia security was good, therefore, the Malays came to trade there. Their goods such as jars, gongs, and goods made of silver and bronze were sold to the Ibans. Since the land was fertile, they planted padi, rubber and some fruit trees around their Kampung areas. For those who had the money started their own small business in Kapit Town.

(3) Chinese Community

When Chinese first came to Kapit, they were merely trying their luck because the place was very rich with its produce. They worked very hard in the business field that some of them became rich later. In 1929, a Chinese Primary School called Hock Nam School was built for their children. An organisation was set up to look after the security and welfare of their members.

*Chinese
Temple
Kapit.*



According to some elderly Chinese, the Chinese Hokkiens came to Kapit in the early 1880's to look for fortune. They traded with the local people by selling goods like salt, sugar, plates, etc. which they imported from China and Singapore. In return they got pepper, rattan and rubber from the natives there.

In the year 1906, during the Brooke reign, a group of Chinese Hakka who followed the footstep of the Hokkien came to Kapit seeking for fortune. The number grew as time passed by. Some of them were involved in business whereas others became farmers.

The Chinese Foochows came to Kapit from China in early 1919. However, large groups of Foochow actually came from Sibu sometime in 1923. The first Foochow to set foot here was Teo Tien Kwong. He was a businessman dealing with gold and

silver. As time passed by, more and more Foochow settlers came either as pepper farmers or rubber tappers and they settled down along Sungai Belit and Selirik areas. However, many of them have opened up their own business now.

VIII. KAPIT DURING JAPANESE OCCUPATION

Although the Japanese occupied Sarawak from 16.12.1941 until they surrendered on 15.8.1945, Kapit was not as bad as Kuching, Sibu or Miri when compared with the cruel treatment of the Japanese on the Sarawakians. The Japanese after conquering Sibu on 19.1.1942 just sent some troops to station at Kanowit, Song, Kapit and Belaga.

After successful landing at Bario in Baram District on 25.3.1945, the Australian Services Reconnaissance Department (SRD) headed by Major Tom Harrison organised the natives for a counter-attack against the Japanese. On 16.4.1945, SRD sent Major Bill Sochon to command a group of armed troop which consisted of 500 Iban warriors and other natives together with some Chinese moved over to Rajang River from Baram. They managed to occupy Belaga on 1.6.1945 and recapture Kapit on 24.6.1945. 3 days after they reoccupied Song and on 3.8.1945 Kanowit also fell into the hand of SRD.

As a whole Kapit Division seemed to be a rescuing place for the Australian force to chase away the Japanese invaders from the soil of Sarawak. Even the violent waters of the Pelagus played an important part to get rid of the

*Dewan
Suarah,
Kapit.*



*Pelagus
Resort,
Kapit.*



retreating Japanese in 1945. Upon successful landing of the Australian troops, the Japanese soldiers had been instructed to withdraw into the centre of Borneo. A Japanese party was proceeding upriver accompanied by a number of political prisoners. The Ibans accompanying them had made up their minds to attack the Japanese at Pasir Nai. The entire Japanese troop and their prisoners were slaughtered in this massacre.

During the World War Two, when the Japanese troop was attacked, many shophouses in Kapit were destroyed. Under the new town

plan, a compact square of new wooden shophouses was built facing Batang Rajang.

IX. TOURIST CENTRE AND EDUCATION/MEDICAL SERVICES

As the gateway to Upper Rajang, all travellers going to places above Kapit have to stay in the town before proceeding uprivers. The famous Bakun and Murum Rapids are located above Belaga whereas Pelagus Rapids, where Pelagus Resort costing RM6 million is located, is accessible by boats from Kapit. Pelagus Resort is an environmental-friendly hotel, blending in with its natural surroundings, incorporating local traditions of architecture and design. Built in the style of an Iban longhouse, it has 40 rooms. Besides experiencing the longhouse style staying at Pelagus Resort, travellers can visit the flora and fauna of nearby Pelagus National Park.

It was declared open on 23.8.1994.

Presently, there are 78 primary schools and 6 secondary schools in Kapit Division to provide education facilities to the school children. The Medical Department has provided one district hospital in Kapit Town, two dispensaries, eight rural clinics, nine sub-dispensaries and thirteen Village Health Centres in the whole division in order to promote and upgrade the standard of living and good health of the people. Besides, there are thirty-three flying doctor service stations in the interior areas.

X. COMMUNICATION IN KAPIT

1) *Riverine and Road Communication*

At the moment, there is no road connecting Kapit to the outside world. All roads in Kapit lead to the timber camps or nearby longhouses, Kampung and the new township of Kapit. Kapit is a rural town with about 30 kilometres of road around it. With its position midpoint of Rajang River between Belaga and Sibuan, it is a great asset to this town of about 5,000 multiracial people. Express boats dart their way up and down river, ferrying passengers and cargo to Belaga and places along Batang Rajang down to Sibuan. There is a tremendous rise and fall in the river water level at Kapit and during the really dry weather, the river bank appears as a substantial and muddy cliff.

Besides the movement of the express boats along the swift and turbulent Batang Rajang, another common activity along the river in front of Kapit Town is the steamers pulling consignment of timber logs. Logs are bound together like rows of matchsticks, stretching for hundred of metres. However, sinker logs are stacked on massive metal barges and a mobile crane travels with the load to assist with the loading and unloading at the

nearby sawmills or at Tanjung Manis near Kuala Rajang.

Occasionally, barges of coal from Merit-Pila areas, about 13 kilometres east of the outcrops of Long Hill are being pulled down river by a launch for unloading at Tanjung Manis in Sarikei Division for export to Japan.

There is an airstrip in Kapit for Twin-Otter aircraft to land. However, due to poor response from the public, the air service was terminated a few years ago.

2) *Pelagus Rapids*

There was a legend as to how the Pelagus Rapids were formed. Long long ago, a large serpent was captured and sliced into seven segments which were floated down the river and settled at Pelagus, forming the famous Pelagus Rapids. When the water level is low, the rocks are visible and can be seen to be clean-cut rocks as if they had been sliced. Until today, the locals still practise the ritual of offerings to appease the spirits of the Rapids. Locals related a story of having seen a man with colourful attire sitting on the rock, resembling a dragon at 'Wong Nabau' in Iban meaning 'Dragon Rapids'. It is particularly dangerous during low-water level

as the rapids are stiff coupled with a narrow space or passage way to allow navigation of small longboats or speedboats in the fast flowing water. Hidden rocks are the major obstacles to riverine transports. There are many dangerous sections of rapids which locally known as Lapoh, Sukat, Bidai, Tilan, Makup, Batu Nabau, Lungga and Mawang.

On the way by boats to Belaga, travellers must pass through Pelagus Rapids infamously known as the "Rapids of Death." A number of express boats, tug-boats, speed-boats and more than one hundred longboats had capsized at the Rapids resulting a high rate of deaths. According to an elderly man from Rumah Belaja, Nanga Benin below the mighty rapids, if "Antu Belang" (White Ghost) appears at night, it means that a tragedy is likely to happen at the rapids. Another local folk revealed that if a strange sound in the form of extra-loud noise of splashing water, someone seemed to "Berpantun" (reciting of traditional poems) or "Betadoh" (traditional music of Iban dance "Ngajat") was heard from the rapids the previous night, it was a sign of warning that a tragedy was likely to happen soon. Upon seeing "Antu Belang" or hearing a strange and eerie

sound, the locals would normally stay away from the rapids. Outside people who do not believe such superstition may have to pay for the price.

The latest casualty involving 3 government staff including Kapit Divisional Development Officer, Encik Michael Duk Andos were drowned at Sukat Rapid on 24.2.1999 at 2.30 p.m. In actual fact, the rapids are a major obstacle of riverine transportation. For safety purpose, there is a path along the right bank of the river for the passengers to walk through while the boat is man-handled through the difficult stretches.

The Pelagus played a historic role in posing a barrier to the Iban raiding parties warring on the other indigenous groups who had settled upriver, as few dared brave the treacherous rapids then. Although nowadays, the use of engines makes passage easier, going through the rapids can be a bone chilling experience.

XI. NATURAL RESOURCES

Kapit Division is full of natural resources. The greater part of the division is still covered by primary forests and larger portions of the land especially in Ulu Balleh and Ulu Balui are practically uninhabited.

Hence, Kapit Division is exporting thousands of tonnes of timber logs and processed timber each month and the export of timber from Kapit earns a lot of revenue for the State. The timber industry is spearheaded the speedy economic development which expedited social changes in the division.

Sarawak has widespread and abundant occurrences of coal. One of the largest coal deposits is located in the Merit-Pila area and Hose Mountains in Kapit Division. The coal in the Merit-Pila is of lignitic variety and the main industrial use is as a fuel for power generation. The Merit-Pila deposit is located in the upper reaches of Batang Rajang about 75 kilometres up-stream of Kapit Town. Extensive prospecting work was carried out between 1974-1977. The following zones have been identified as the coal deposit areas:-

- 1) Nanga Merit area where two major coal zones designated as Belawie-Mujan and Merit-Tebulan are found;
- 2) The Pila River area; and
- 3) The Long Hills area.

Prospecting work has indicated that a total potential coal reserve of 250 million tonnes is available in the Merit-Pila basin. Logistics and the high cost of haulage

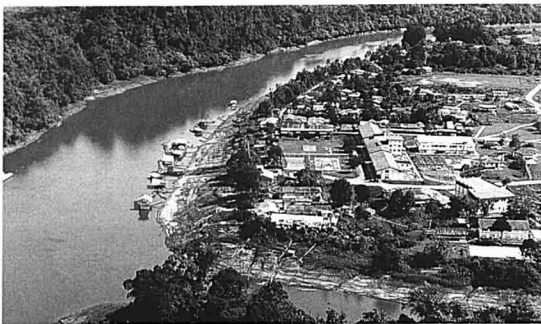


Loading of coal at Merit-Pila, Kapit.



Transporting of logs in Ulu Kapit.

continue to be prime concern of the mines; these have rendered mining marginally economical and risky. At present, a mining company, The Global Minerals Sarawak, was given a mining certificate in 1982 and a mining lease covering an area of 2,485 hectares in the Belawie-Mujan and the Long Hill areas in 1985. Since mining operation commenced in late 1988, about 1,205,000



*Aerial view
of Belaga
Bazaar.*

tonnes of coal have been produced. Production in 1997 came from the Beredai Mine amounting to 103,469 tonnes. Prospects for coal mining is good with the current demand for coal by local power plants and cement factories. Kapar Coal-fired Power Station in Peninsular Malaysia is using Merit-Pila coal to blend the imported coal. By using Merit-Pila coal, this power station is saving between RM5 million and RM10 million in foreign exchange each year.

In Ulu Balleh area, there is also a potential gold ore deposit. Two companies have been given a General Prospecting Licence to prospect for gold deposit in the area.

XII. BELAGA DISTRICT

1) General Information

Formerly, Belaga was a sub-district of Kapit District. On 2.4.1973, when Kapit became a division, Belaga was also upgraded to a district. The district has an area of 19,403 square kilometres and is mostly covered by dense tropical jungles, undulating hills and mountain ranges.

Belaga Bazaar is the administrative headquarters of Belaga District. Based on 1991 census, the district had a population of 22,569 the majority of them are the Orang Ulu

Landmark of Belaga - The concrete 'Belawing' (Hornbill) sculpture. According to belief of the Orang Ulu, the bird possesses extraordinary powers. It assists people having good faith.



The scientific name of Belaga fish is *Betta Splendens*. However, some locals said that "Belaga" in local Malay means "Lawan Sendiri" (fighting among themselves). In olden days, Belaga was a place where one community fighting against another community for survival.

3) Belaga Bazaar

Before the establishment of the Belaga Bazaar, the trade was nominated by the Malay traders who were under the protection of the Sultan of Brunei. During the Brooke's rule, more Chinese were migrating to the area. In 1893, the Sarawak Gazette reported that there were 14 shophouses in the Bazaar and 15 more were under construction, 10 belonged to the Chinese and 5 to the Malays. Belaga

followed by the Iban with some Chinese and the Malays, staying around Belaga Bazaar. However, according to 1999 Mid-Year Population Estimate, Belaga District had a population of 30,700.

2) How did Belaga get her name.

The name of Belaga actually derived from the name of an inland fish found around the area.



Belaga Bazaar along Jalan Tro Tua Kheng.

Bazaar is located at the hilly region of Upper Rajang Basin, at the confluence of Belaga River and Balui River. The shophouses here are mostly owned by the Chinese Hokkien and some local natives are also involving themselves in petty trading.

During World War II in 1945, the Allied Forces began their counter-attack against the Japanese at Belaga and eventually liberated Belaga on 1.9.1945. Belaga Bazaar remained as it was after the war. On 9.4.1979, 21 units of new shophouses were built along Jalan Teo Tua Kheng in Belaga. However, on 22.8.1995, the disastrous fire destroyed 3 rows of 20 old shophouses along Jalan Penghulu Hang Nyipa overlooking the Belaga River. In 1996, 12 units of temporary shophouses were erected. In 1998, 6 units of 3 storey concrete shophouses were constructed along Jalan Ului Lian and other 5 units are still under construction to replace the 20 old shophouses gutted by fire in 1995. Based on a survey conducted in December, 1998, Belaga Bazaar consists of the following shophouses:

<i>Type of shophouses</i>	<i>No. of units</i>
1) Double-storey semi concrete shophouses along Jalan Teo Tua Kheng	19
2) Double-storey concrete shophouses at the back of Main Bazaar and along Jalan Penghulu Hang Nyipa	14
3) Double-storey wooden shophouses on stilt along Jalan Penghulu Hang Nyipa	4
4) Three-storey concrete shophouses along Jalan Teo Tua Kheng and Jalan Ului Lian	10
5) Three-storey concrete shophouses along Jalan Ului Lian still under construction	5
Total :	52



*District
Office,
Belaga.*

In early 1999, the 12 units of temporary shophouses are still in business. There is no district council for Belaga District. However, Kapit District Council has established its branch office in Belaga to provide essential service to the Bazaar. There are 6 units of Council Hawker stalls and recreational facilities being provided by the Kapit District Council there. Although Belaga is a small bazaar, it has 6 small hotels to provide accommodation to visitors and tourists. There is one Mini Panggung to provide entertainment in the area.

4) *Fort Vyner*

On 13.1.1884, the Brooke authority built a fort at Jalan Wharf Belaga. With the labour and materials contributed by the local people, the actual expenditure for the construction of the fort was \$295.93. It was called Fort Vyner named after the third White Rajah, Sir Charles Vyner Brooke. During the Brooke Regime, it was used as a fort as well as an administrative centre in the region.

In 1965, the fort was demolished and the construction of old District Office Belaga was completed. On 31.7.1993, the new District Office at Jalan Wharf was built and it was

declared open by Y.B. Datuk Gramong Juna, the then Assistant Minister for Rural Development. The District Officer together with his staff occupy the new office leaving the old office (Fort Vyner) for Post Office, KEMAS office and other State Agencies continue to provide the essential service to the people there.

5) *Communication in Belaga*

Belaga is accessible by river, air and logging road. There is a daily express boat service to and from Sibu/Kapit/Belaga. It takes more than 7 hours from Sibu to Kapit and then to Belaga. However from Belaga to Kapit and Sibu it takes only 6 hours, but the time taken for both journeys depend on the depth and the flow of river water. When arriving at Belaga, one may experience the unusual sight of disarranged stairs leading from the river to the top of the embarkment. This is because of the constant change of the river level. After a heavy downpour, the river level rises dramatically. However, within one hour or two, the river may turn into a torrent, only to drop to its original level a few hours later.

The new Belaga concrete wharf was completed in 1993 and it was declared open by Y.B. Dato

Celestine Ujang, the then Minister for Land Development on 27.8.1993. Since then the wharf service has improved satisfactorily. Belaga Airfield at Sekapan Panjang was completed in 1959. It is situated downriver from Belaga Bazaar which is about 15 minutes by a longboat drive. There is an air service by Twin-otter aircraft from Sibul to Belaga twice a week and from Bintulu to Belaga once a week. It takes about 50 minutes by air from both areas. Belaga Bazaar is connected by a logging road to Tubau in Bintulu Division. It takes about two to three hours from Belaga to Tubau if the weather is fine. However, if it is a wet weather or the road condition is bad, the journey may take a longer time.

6) Bakun Dam Project

What will significantly affect the future of Kapit Division is the Bakun Dam Project at about 37 kilometres from Belaga at the upper reaches of Balui River, a big tributary of Rajang River. This Bakun Dam Project which is expected to be completed by the year 2005 or later will cost an immense sum of RM15 billion and will have a production capacity of 2,400 mega-watts of electricity. When this mammoth Bakun Dam begins operation, it will certainly cause immeasurable impact on the

whole of the Rajang Basin especially Belaga area. The Bakun Hydro-electric Project will be the largest power project in Malaysia and also in South East Asia.

The area to be flooded will cover 70,000 hectares. When it is flooded, over 100 islands will be created and they will remain untouched as forest islands. If the project is materialised, it will position Sarawak as the "Power House of Malaysia" and certainly it may become a major player in Malaysia's march towards full industrialisation under the Vision 2020 and even beyond.

The State Government has spent over RM200 million to resettle 10,000 local people from 15 longhouses who are affected by the Bakun Hydro-electric Project. They are going to be resettled in Sungai Asap area in order to make life in the Bakun Resettlement Area as comfortable as possible. According to Y.B. Dato Dr. James Masing, the State Tourism Minister, who is also the Chairman of the Resettlement Committee and Bakun Trust Fund, the government has spent a total of RM272.2 million on facilities in the new Resettlement Area in Sungai Asap which include treated water, electricity, roads, shophouses, schools, clinics and longhouses. Very soon, Sungai Asap which is 86 kilometre from Belaga will become a sub-district.

The recent scaled-down Bakun Hydroelectric Project is expected to take at least six years to complete. The first phase of the construction of a power station with capacity to generate 500 mega-watts is expected to be completed in three years. So far the Government had paid RM950 million to take over the project from Bakun Hydroelectric Corporation and handed over to Tenaga Nasional Bhd to head the consortium to redevelop the project with the participation from Sarawak Government and private companies in the State.

7) *Belaga Today*

Belaga has a small population but with big land area and big Bakun Project in the district. Although it is the most interior district in Sarawak, it is a peaceful and relaxing place. People are friendly and living in their own free world like brothers and sisters in a big family. It is very obvious that there is no more racial conflict and 'Belaga' among the ethnic groups as in the Brooke era. The present Belaga is a multi-racial district where people live happily and harmoniously.

XIII. SONG DISTRICT

1) *General Information*

Song was also a sub-district of Kapit District initially. However,

on 2.4.1973 when Kapit District was upgraded to the Seventh Division, Song became a district of the Division. Song Bazaar is the administrative headquarters of Song District. Based on 1991 Census, Song District had a population of 17,937, the majority of them are the Ibans, with some Chinese and Malay communities staying around Song Bazaar. However, according to 1999 Mid-Year Population Estimate, the population of Song District had increased up to 20,800. Song District has an area of 3,935 square kilometres.

2) *How did Song get her name.*

Based on the interview with the late Mr. David Panggau Sandin, the District Officer, Song, the origin of the name "Song" actually derived from the name of an Orang Ulu who stayed at Nanga Song long before the migration of the Ibans from Batang Kapuas, Kalimantan Indonesia in 1876. In the olden days, whoever passing the area would call the place "Rumah Song" (Song's House) and eventually, the place was known as "Song" until today.

However, according to another legend, when the Batang Rajang Basin was ceded to the Brooke Regime by the Sultan of Brunei in

the year 1861, a Brooke's officer was sent over to name the places along Batang Rajang. When he arrived at the present site of Song, he was in a happy mood and kept singing songs. In the end, he named the place as "Song" until today.

3) *Historical Background*

In 1876, the grandfather of Temenggong Koh ak Jubang and his followers migrated from Upper Kapuas, Kalimantan Indonesia to the Katibas area. Due to constant fighting between the Iban and Kayan/Kenyah people over the possession of good farming land, Sir Charles Brooke decided that no Ibans should be permitted to live in Upper Katibas. In October 1876, he forced the Ibans to settle around Song, including the family of Koh's grandfather.

In 1913 under the leadership of Temenggong Koh, the Iban community started to plant rubber in Song, but at the same time, they still collected jungle produce and practised hill padi shifting cultivation.



Song Main Bazaar.



New shophouses at the back of Song Main Bazaar.

4) *Establishment of Song Bazaar*

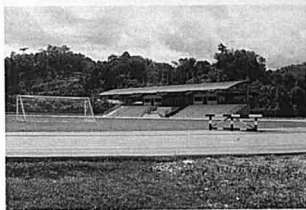
There was no record to show when was the establishment of Song Bazaar. However, it was believed that it was only after 1876 when the second White Rajah forced the Iban community to settle down around Song and after the establishment of Kapit Bazaar in 1880 that Song

Bazaar was established by the Chinese Hokkien. According to the Chinese elders in Song, the first Song Bazaar was built on the floating platform at the opposite bank of the present Bazaar at Nanga Song by a group of Chinese Hokkien in the early 1900s. The first Song Kapitan China was Leong Ah Swee. In 1945, Nanga Song Bazaar was bombed by the Australian Forces in order to chase away the Japanese and on 27.6.1945 Song was liberated. After bombing the shopkeepers moved over to the present Song Bazaar and put up about 20 wooden shophouses with Attap roof for petty trading. Some of the shophouses were opened for general trading for the purchase of rubber, Jelutong and rattan produce while the other shophouses were meant for residential purposes. It was only after the World War II that better improved wooden shophouses and a Chinese Primary School were built to replace the old ones. The present Chinese Tuapekong Temple was built in 1975.

On 7.9.1978, a row of 6



District Council Kapit, Song Branch.



Mini Sport Complex, Song.

shophouses was gutted by fire. It made 93 persons from 16 families homeless.

5) Song Today

Based on a survey conducted in December, 1998, Song Bazaar consists of 49 units of shophouses. The details are as follows:-

<i>Type of shophouses</i>	<i>No. of units</i>
1) Double-storey semi wooden shophouses in the Main Bazaar	18
2) Double-storey concrete shophouses at the side of Main Bazaar	4
3) 3-storey concrete shophouses at the Main Bazaar	6
4) 3-storey concrete shophouses at the back of Main Bazaar	21
Total:	49

There is no district council in Song District. However, it is under the jurisdiction of Kapit District Council and Kapit District Council Branch Office has been established at the side of Song Bazaar to serve the people there. Besides, a District Council Market and a new council wet market are also built in Song Bazaar for the hawkers to trade. The only motorable road in Song District is Jalan Song/Nanga Tekan which is about 6 kilometres long.

Government buildings are also constructed to

provide the basic administration to the people there. A new mini-sport stadium was constructed at the back of the Song Bazaar. Completed in June, 1998 the stadium provides a venue of sport and game activities in the area. In the next five years till 2005, a 8.5 kilometre road from Song Bazaar to SMK Katibas costing RM15 million and a 4 kilometre road to Temalat costing RM7 million will be constructed in the district. Besides, rural clinics at Nanga Dalai, Sungai Iran, Nanga Janan, Sungai Tekalit and Nanga Engkuah in Upper Katibas at an estimated cost of RM400,000/- each will be built. In Song Bazaar itself, a 28-bed polyclinic costing RM1.8 million and a new Song wharf will also be built in order to meet the requirement of the development and to cater the needs of the increasing population in the district.



Land and Survey Department at Kapit New Township.

XIV. KAPIT TODAY

Kapit is typically rich in colourful Iban and Orang Ulu culture. It is a small but beautiful rural town about 100 kilometres from Sibuan. There are six banking agencies and about ten big and small hotels operating in Kapit Town. Kapit District has an area of 15,596 square kilometres. In 1991, Kapit District had a population of 55,759. However, according to 1999 Mid-Year Population Estimate, the district had increased its population to 70,800. There is only one sub-district called Nanga Merit in Kapit District and 1991 Census showed that it had a population of 6,482. Nanga Merit has 4 units of single-storey wooden shophouses on stilts.

Based on a survey conducted in December 1998, Kapit Town itself consists of 148 units of shophouses. The details are as follows:-

<i>Type of shophouses</i>	<i>No. of units</i>
1) Double-storey semi-wooden shophouses	23
2) Three-storey concrete shophouses	6
3) Four-storey concrete shophouses	119

Total:	148



*Express
boats at
Kapit
Wharf.*

There are 5 empty shophouse lots which are left vacant because the old shophouses were gutted by fire sometime in 1996. However, the new shophouses are now under construction. Most of the four-storey shophouses in the town do have an additional storey on the roof top. Hence, instead of four-storey building, it has become five-storey shophouses. The four-storey shophouses are mostly built along Jalan Teo Chow Beng, Jalan Penghulu Nyanggau and Jalan Wharf areas.

The main problem encountered in Kapit is the shortage of manpower as most of the able labourers are either away on 'Berjalar' or working in logging camps and coal mines for better cash income. The area under agricultural activities are still small with pepper, cocoa, rubber and hill padi as the main crops. Shifting cultivation of hill padi which is still a predominant agricultural activity of the rural population in the Division. However, the adoption of appropriate improved technology

and management practices has gradually been accepted by the farmers. Since the introduction of Agricultural Development Package in 1991, 87 villages which comprised of 2,049 Farm Families have been covered under this programme.

After Kapit became the Divisional Headquarters of the 7th Division in 1973, massive government buildings, such as new District Office, Civic Centre costing RM3.8 million, Government Hospital, Sport Stadium and even a scenic Lily Pond which were constructed in Kapit Town. Besides, the timber businesses picked up which made Kapit into a flourishing town where the number of new shops and concrete residential houses increased, resulting in the town extending into the rural land which was once the undulating hills and secondary jungles. Moreover, the State Government is currently planning and implementing Kapit New Township at Sungai Bletek and a new Bletek Wharf is built at the side of Batang Rajang for loading and unloading purposes in the new township. Meanwhile, a RM5.5 million bridge and access road have been constructed across Sungai Kapit to accelerate the development. Land and Survey Department building, indoor stadium, swimming pool and hostels have been built in



*Resident's
Office,
Kapit.*



*Shophouses
along Jalan
Penghulu
Nyanggau,
Kapit.*

the new township. In the next few years more buildings and housing estates are expected to be built along Jalan Airport, Jalan Penghulu Nyanggau, Jalan Selirik and Jalan Bletek areas. In 1999, a sum of RM348,000/- has been allocated by Kapit District Council for the upgrading of the Kapit Town. Among other improvements, the replica of "Teressang"- a

traditional Iban offering place after "Miring" ceremony will be made bigger and higher. Trumpet flowers are quite common in Kapit. Hence, trumpet flower becomes the symbol of Kapit Town.

The economy of Kapit relies mainly on timber industry, forest produce and coal export which depend entirely on market demands that are basically unstable. Therefore, to ensure a bright future, Kapit needs to expedite its development towards a diversified economy. To enhance the development of commerce and industry, vast areas of land can be utilised for growing cash crops, rearing livestock such as cattle, and fresh water fish culture; the rich forest resources and mineral deposits can provide the raw materials used in the light manufacturing industries;

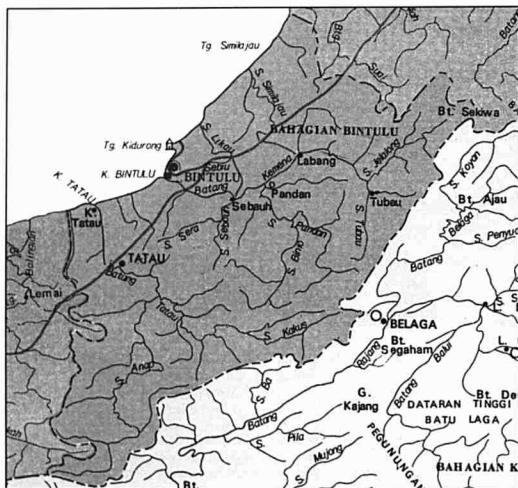
roads must be constructed to provide better land communication with the other major towns in the State. At the same time, we should take advantage of the natural fauna and flora of the Upper Rajang in order to develop its eco-tourism industry. Only then can Kapit develop steadily on the foundation of a diversified economy without having to rely solely on the timber industry.

As a whole Kapit Division is obviously following the footsteps of Sibuan Division to become one of the advanced and higher living standard divisions. The progress and outstanding achievements of Kapit in politics, economy and racial harmony which are interconnected with its colourful historical past will definitely bring Kapit and its people a glorious success when the country advances towards the 21st Century.

CHAPTER 11

BINTULU DIVISION

Map of Bintulu Division



Bintulu - The Energy Town of Sarawak

I. INTRODUCTION

Bintulu Division, the 9th Division of Sarawak, has an area of 12,166 square kilometres and based on 1991 census, it had a population of 107,675. However, according to the Mid-Year Population Estimate 1999, Bintulu had a population of 142,400. About 60% of the population are concentrated in urban areas in Bintulu, Tatau and Sebauh while the rest are scattered throughout the rural areas in the division. The general physical features of Bintulu are the coastal riverine flood plains, the central undulating land and the interior hilly land with steep slopes.

The population can be found in the lower part of Kemena River where the Malays, Melanau and Chinese live. The Iban community stay in the Sebauh River and Pandan River. Further upriver, around Tubau are Kayan people. Some Punan settlements

are found along the Jelalong River. Historically, Bintulu was part of Brunei Territory until 10.8.1861. On 11.8.1861, Sultan of Brunei ceded all rivers and lands from Oya River to Tanjung Kidurong to the Brooke Regime. From that time onwards, Bintulu Division formed part of the Sarawak Territory.

Prior to 1.1.1987, Bintulu was part of the then Fourth Division with its headquarters at Miri. During the Hari Kebangsaan celebration centered in Bintulu on 31.8.1986, YAB the Chief Minister of Sarawak, Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr.) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud announced the upgrading of Bintulu District into a new division of Sarawak with effect from 1.1.1987. From then onwards, Bintulu became a division of Sarawak and it has two districts and one sub-district as follows:-

<i>District</i>	<i>Sub-district</i>	<i>Population in 1991</i>
(1) Bintulu District	Sebauh Sub-district	86,342
(2) Tatau District		21,333
	Total:	----- 107,675 -----

*Aerial view
of Bintulu
Town.*



In the whole of Bintulu Division, there are 2 towns and 4 Bazaars namely:-

- 1) Bintulu Town
- 2) Tatau Town
- 3) Sebauh Bazaar
- 4) Pandan Bazaar
- 5) Labang Bazaar and
- 6) Tubau Bazaar

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

1) Origin of Iban Community

According to Mr. Michael Buma's book entitled "Iban Customs and Traditions", the Ibans in Borneo especially in the Bintulu region

originally migrated from Java Island to Borneo while others came from Kamoja (Kampuchea). In order not to be ruled by a stronger tribe called Kamarau (Klimer Rouge), the Ibans, headed by Datu Ayu, left Kamoja by rafts and eventually they arrived in Merudu Bay in Sabah. At the Merudu Bay, they were subjected to frequent raids by the people from Sulu Island (Southern Philippines). Hence, they got into the rafts again and finally they reached a place called Bintulu. Datu Ayu was later nick-named "Kemena" by his people.

2) *Naming of Kemena River*

The origin of naming "Kemena" River still remains a mystery. Some elders in Bintulu said that the river "Kemena" was named after the nick name of Datu Ayu whereas others argued that Datu Ayu's nick name derived from "Kemena" River. However, another version said that when the Brooke's official visited the area, he was asked by a local folk, "Ke mana?" (where do you go?). The Brooke's official could not understand Bahasa Melayu and misunderstood that the local folk told him the place was called "Ke mana" and, hence, he named the place as "Kemana" and eventually the word is pronounced as "Kemena" until today.

3) *Origin of Melanau Community*

According to a legend, the Melanau originally migrated from Bali Island, Indonesia to Sarawak more than 500 years ago. Being pagans at that time, they moved away from Bali to Sarawak in order to avoid being converted to either Hinduism or Islam. They travelled across Java Sea and they first landed at a coastal area in Lundu District now known as Teluk Melano. From there, they travelled along the coastal area of Sarawak and finally they settled down in various coastal areas in between Kuala Rajang and Kuala



"Welcome to Bintulu" - The Energy Town of Sarawak.

Baram including Bintulu area. Another group of the Melanau ancestors were the Malays from Brunei when Sarawak was under the Brunei rule. A great deal of intermarriages took place between the Brunei noblemen and the Melanau women. As a result there are many Brunei descendants with the title of Pengiran, Awangku and Awang in Bintulu/Mukah areas. The popular Melanau village in Bintulu is Kampung Jepak where fish drying, manufacturing Belacan and Cencaluk as well as sago processing are still very active in the area.

III. How Bintulu Got Her Name

There are four versions of the legend as to how Bintulu got her name.

- 1) One legend revealed that in the olden days, Bintulu people generally had elongated head and, hence, the place where they stayed was given the name "Bat Ulaui". In the local Melanau language, "Bat" means "long" and "Ulaui" means "head". Hence, "Bat Ulaui" means long headed.



*Human skulls.
(Ulaui).*

- 2) According to another legend, the origin of the name of "Bintulu" started when head hunting was still rampant throughout Sarawak. The locals referred to head hunting as "Milai". After "Milai", the people smoked and dried the skulls at the site where the Department of Forest and Department of Agriculture buildings once stood. The process was known as "Betak" in the local Melanau dialect. Hence, "Betak Ulaui" means "head drying place". As time passed by, the word "Betak Ulaui" faced language metamorphosis. Thus, "Betak Ulaui" became "Bentulau" and later to "Bintulu" until today.

- 3) The third version was still centered on heads more to picking up heads of which the locals called it as "Mentu Ulaui". "Mentu" means "pick" and "Ulaui" means "head". Later, "Mentu Ulaui" became



*Bintulu
Town in the
late 1950s.
The wooden
shophouses
are no more
in existence.*

"Mentulau". When the Brooke's officials came, the sound of "Mentulau" sounded more like "Bintulu" to the foreign ears and, hence, the name "Bintulu" was known and being used until today.

- 4) The fast running water from Sungai Jelalong and Sungai Tubau which flows into South China Sea mixes with the river water from Batang Kemena at the mouth of the river. Long ago, the people who stayed at Muara Batang Kemena gave the name "Ba Tulau" to the place where they stayed. "Ba" in Bintulu Melanau dialect means "water" whereas "Tulau" means "mixing". Hence, "Ba Tulau" means "mixing water".

Whatever versions of the origin of "Bintulu", the legend generally linked to the place with heads for glory. Like the transformation of the name, "Bat Ulau", "Betak Ulau", or "Mentu Ulau", "Ba Tulau", the town's social economic and



Old Bintulu shophouses - the only row of shophouses left in the modern Bintulu Town.



Tanjung Batu Commercial Centre.

infrastructure faces similar fate. From a mere small fishing village of 150 years ago, Bintulu has transformed into one of the fastest developing towns in Sarawak today and even in Malaysia, rich in natural resources such as crude oil, gas, silica sand, coal and tropical timber.

IV. MEETING PLACE OF SARAWAK COUNCIL NEGRI

Bintulu created a history when the first Council Negri of Sarawak held the meeting there. It was therefore the birth place of the Sarawak Legislative Council in 1867.

On 11.8.1861, the territory of Sarawak was further enlarged when the weak Sultan of Brunei ceded all rivers and lands from Oya River to Kidurong, Bintulu to the Brooke Regime. Six years later, Rajah Muda, Sir Charles Brooke, called for the first meeting of Council Negri in Bintulu on 8.9.1867. The members of the Council Negri (General Council as it was called then) in 1867 were appointed personally by Rajah James Brooke. They were restricted to only 5 Brooke's officers, 16 Malay and Melanau leaders with the White Rajah as the President. The community leaders were selected from Kuching, Landu, Lingga, Sinanggang (Sri Aman), Saribas, Kalaka, Sibu, Mukah, Oya and Bintulu. They met at the first time in Bintulu to discuss the general affairs of the State and to draw its Standing Orders on various matters of great importance to the population in the country under Sarawak Rule. At that time, Bintulu was merely a small fishing village. However, after 132 years of fast physical development, Bintulu has actually become one of the fastest developing towns in Sarawak.

A clock tower monument, about 50 feet high, is erected at the site where the first meeting of Council Negri was held in Bintulu.

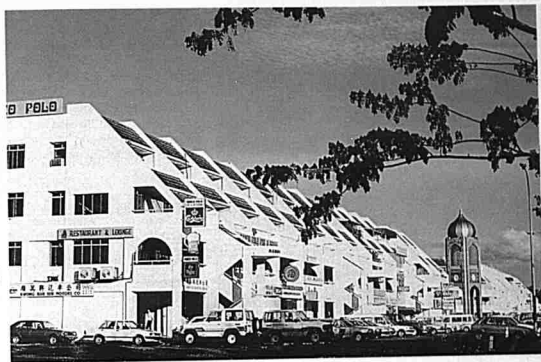


*Council
Negri
Plaque.*



*Clock
monument
commemorating
the centenary of
first meeting of
Sarawak
Council Negri
in Bintulu on
8.9.1867.*

*Bintulu
commercial
area.*



A plaque explaining the monument commemorating the centenary of the meeting of Council Negri, 1867 is affixed at the base of the monument. On 8.9.1998, it marked the 131st anniversary of the State Council Negri meeting, the oldest assembly in Malaysia and it is believed to be the oldest in South East Asia. The clock tower monument was renamed "Tugu Dewan Undangan Negri" (Council Negri Monument). The official naming of the Council Negri Monument at Jalan Abang Galau, Bintulu was officiated by Deputy Speaker of State Legislative Assembly, Dato' Mohd. Asfia Awang Nassar on 21.11.1998.

V. THE GROWTH OF BINTULU

Bintulu Town is the headquarters of Bintulu Division as well as Bintulu District. In the olden days, it was only a fishing village commonly known as "Belacan Bazaar" because it produced and is still producing the best Belacan or shrimp pastes, Duai fish and Cencaluk. Moreover, it produced plenty of rubber, Jelutong and Belian. Logging activity was confined to a minimum operation only. It could supply enough logs for the local consumption only.

According to 1871 Census, Bintulu District which had an area of 7,200 square

*Sebauh
Bazaar.*



kilometres, had a small population of 4,399, the majority of the population were the Malay/Melanau (4,118), Iban (139), Chinese (77) and Indian (5). In 1991, the district had a population of 86,342. However, based on the Mid-Year Population Estimate 1999, the population jumped up to 114,900. Sebauh, the only sub-district, had a population of 18,830 based on 1991 Census. There are 55 units of shophouses in Sebauh Bazaar and the Bazaar is 45 kilometres from Bintulu Town.

Bintulu Town is situated on the northern estuary of Kemena River and in actual fact the township is situated at the mouth of Kemena River. It is just south of Tanjung Kidurong deep seaport where once the people of Bintulu fought and defeated the Illanun pirates on 12.4.1869. There was a fort known as Fort Keppel which was named after Rajah James Brooke's friend was built at Bintulu in 1868. Chinese Teochew traders first came to Bintulu and opened up their shophouses for trading in

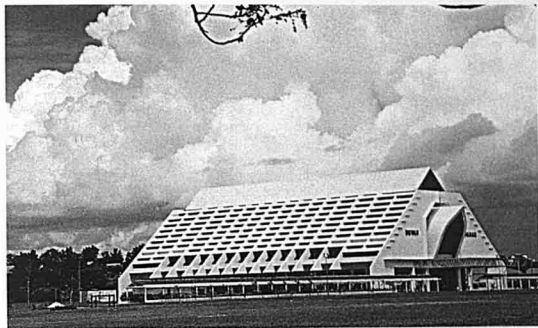
1894. At first, they built 8 wooden shophouses with Attap roof. In 1896, Bintulu Bazaar had increased to 20 wooden shophouses. In 1910, a Chinese Primary School was established in Bintulu. Chinese Foochow from Sibuan came over to Bintulu in 1926 and they involved themselves both in agricultural and business sectors.

When Bintulu was celebrating her 100th year of becoming part of Sarawak from Brunei in 1961 and 100th year of holding the first Council Negri meeting in Bintulu in 1967, nobody had ever expected that the then small fishing village would become a highly industrial town in 1980s. At that time, a Regatta was held at Bintulu town which had a population of about 3,000 only.

Changes only started in 1969 with the discovery of natural gas and crude oil offshore Bintulu. Attention both by the government and the public sectors slowly concentrated on Bintulu in order to divert the production of sea food to industrial town. Planning for the establishment of deep seaport at Tanjung Kidurong was also intensified. With the huge inflow of capital for industrial and commercial ventures, the town has grown rapidly.

In 1970, the census figure showed that the population of Bintulu Town was in the region of 5,000. However, in 1977, the population raised rapidly to 14,000 and in 1980, it double jumped to 28,000.

*Dewan Suarrah
Bintulu
costing RM7
million was
declared open
on
5. 7. 1988.*



VI. BINTULU - THE NEW GROWTH CENTRE OF SARAWAK

In Sarawak, no region can be as fortunate as the Bintulu region in terms of natural resources of which it is well endowed with inland and offshore. Both natural gas and crude oil were discovered offshore. Natural gas was found at the Central Luconia fields in the early 1970s. Ten fields were found and five are in production. Crude oil was found at the Temena field. Besides, coal and silica sand are found in large deposits in the areas near Bintulu. Up to 1997 more than 4 million tonnes of silica sand were exported to Japan. Moreover, the hinterland abounds with high quality tropical timber and large tracts of cultivable land for agricultural use.

The State Government wishes to exploit valuable agricultural, forest and mineral resources of the area. Furthermore, the government also intends to build a strong network of service centres throughout the State to disperse the economic activities which now tends to concentrate in the large urban centres of Kuching, Sibn and Miri. The ambitious projects and plans for the region in Bintulu necessitated the creation of an autonomous body inter alia to do the followings:-

- 1) Coordinate the development activities;
- 2) Undertake physical development and planning;

- 3) Administer land including the processing and approving of land applications;
- 4) Undertake development of commercial buildings and residential houses;
- 5) Undertake industrial estate development;
- 6) Assume jurisdiction of the Local Authority; and
- 7) Undertake business ventures either on its own or on joint-venture basis.

As a result, Bintulu Development Authority (BDA) was established on 6.7.1978 to implement the important task. BDA started in early 1979 with the preparation of a structure plan for the Bintulu Growth Centre. The plan defined land use into residential, commercial, agricultural and recreational areas. Any plan for the development of the area should conform to the details provided in the plan. The structure plan was completed to meet both short and long term actual and potential projects. Ample industrial sites are available around the Deepsea Port at Tanjung Kidurong. Sites for the LNG Plant, Crude Oil Terminal, Urea/Ammonia Plant, Palm Oil Bulking Installation and the Port have been established.

Locations for service industrial estates have been finalised and similarly those for timber and agro-based industries. While land is available or acquired through compensation, funds from both the State and Federal

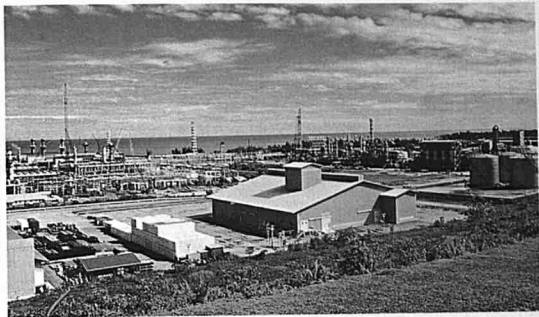
Governments are sought for infrastructure and site developments. To promote the New Economic Policy, industrial lots are sold to Bumiputras at reasonable rates.

Two major residential zones have been established. One residential area which is near existing Bintulu town accommodates about 40,000 people. Another area is near to Kidurong Port where 1,000 acres are reserved for houses for 25,000 residents in the 1990's who are the workers of the various industries at Tanjung Kidurong. It is the implementation of the mammoth projects and investments that made Bintulu well-known overnight to the world.

With the discovery of natural gas, a RM3,000 million plant to liquify natural gas was being set up. This is one of the most outstanding development projects for this new growth Centre. The plant processes some six million tonnes of LNG annually from the Central Luconia Gas Fields. The joint venture project between Malaysia through Petronas (65%), Shell BV (17.5%) and Mitsubishi Corporation of Japan (17.5%) was being implemented on a 700-acre site at Tanjung Kidurong. The project was completed in 1983.

The Temena field produces around 10,000 barrels of crude oil per day. To accommodate this, a crude oil terminal was constructed by the Sarawak Shell Berhad as a contractor to the Petronas. The construction costs RM75 million comprising of three crude oil storage tanks with a capacity of 410,000 barrels each. This project located on the

*MLNG, one of
the biggest
liquidified
natural gas
establishments
in the world,
is situated at
Tg. Kidurong,
Bintulu.*



western boundary of the LNG Plant site was completed in the 1979.

The Urea/Ammonia Plant is a joint-venture project of the ASEAN Countries. Malaysia through Petronas holds 60% of the shares of the project. Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines hold 13% each and Singapore takes 1%. The project was completed in 1984, this RM600 million fertilizer plant is producing 1,500 tonnes of Urea and 1,000 tonnes of Ammonia per day. It is consumed by the local market as well as by the other member nations of ASEAN.

The large areas of oil palm cultivation in Bintulu Division by the Sarawak Land

Development Board have necessitated the construction of an export outlet near the Deepsea Port. This RM16 million investment is for the construction of storage tanks for palm oil produced in the estates found along the Miri/Bintulu Road and Bintulu/Sibu Road.

Sites for other industries such as the Aluminium Smelter, Electric Arc Steel Furnace and the Iron-ore Reduction plant have been completed. Of the three potential projects, the Aluminium Smelter is the largest, requiring about RM1,200 million capital investment. This plant is producing 140,000 tonnes of Aluminium per year both for local and overseas markets.

*New Modern
Shophouses
along
Lebuhraya
Abang
Galau,
Bintulu.*



BDA itself is pursuing a supporting role. As a corollary to development, the influx of people has brought a shortage of houses. BDA is currently building houses for the major industries. The Malaysia LNG Sdn. Bhd. the organisation responsible for the LNG Project, has approached BDA to construct 520 units of houses for their staff accommodation. This RM80 million excluding land project is being developed in several phases. The first phase was completed in March 1981 and the rest in 1983. The Urea/Ammonia project requires about 400 units. Infrastructure works on a large housing estate, the Kidurong Residential Area where the LNG and BDA staff quarters are located are being implemented. Light industries like garages, cold storage, printing presses, workshops, warehouses etc. are located in the light industrial estates.

Road building is being undertaken by the Public Works Department. The RM10 million Tanjung Kidurong road linking

Tanjung Kidurong and Bintulu was completed in late 1979 and it was declared open by the former YAB Prime Minister of Malaysia, the late Dato' Hussein Onn in September 1979. Roads that are being planned, constructed and upgraded include the Miri/Bintulu Road, Bintulu/Ulu Batang Mukah Road, Tanjung Batu Link Road, Tanjung Batu Road, Bukit Nyabau Road and Kampung Jepak Road. The BDA has also upgraded

and extended the urban roads in the town. Meanwhile, the first trunk road was being completed to serve other places and Bintulu as well.

Most of the major projects in Bintulu revolves around the completion of the Deepwater Port. This was a Federal Government project costing more than RM400 million. It was completed in 1982 and now it becomes one of the largest ports in Malaysia. This port is now serving Bintulu and its surrounding areas particularly the major industries.

In the past few years, air passengers have increased tremendously but the present air transport facilities have several limitations. The present airport has a 4,500 feet runway allowing only planes with the maximum size of F27 to land. As a temporary measure, night landing facilities were installed in May 1980 and flight frequencies were increased. Bintulu Town is perhaps the only town in Sarawak as

well as in Malaysia with the airport located right in the middle of the town. Uniquely enough, nowhere in the country can one step out of the plane and walk right into the main street of the town except Bintulu. This fact is recorded in the Guinness of World Record as the town sited nearest to an airport.

VII. FAMOUS AND WELL-KNOWN PROJECTS

At the moment, the fast developing Bintulu Town is famous and well-known to the country as well as to the world in the following projects:-

1) *Liquidified Petroleum Gas Plants (LPG)*

Bintulu makes Malaysia well-known because one of the largest Liquidified Petroleum Gas Plants in the world costing RM3.5 billion is being installed at Tanjung Kidurong, Bintulu. The Malaysian Government invested in this joint venture with Shell and Mitsubishi of Japan. Petronas' equity share in the project is 65% while Shell and Mitsubishi held at 17.5% stake each. The first batch of 57,000 tonnes of liquified petroleum gas was exported to Japan on 29.1.1983. The Tokyo Electric Power Incorporated and Tokyo Gas Limited have contracted to buy 4 million tonnes and 2 million tonnes of liquidified petroleum gas a year respectively.

2) *Bintulu Fertilizer Factory*

Bintulu is well-known in ASEAN. One ASEAN joint venture project costing RM739 million, Bintulu Fertilizer, making use of Liquidified Petroleum Gas, was established in Bintulu in 1985. It is the biggest fertilizer factory in Asia with a daily production of fertilizer of 1,500 tonnes and the daily production of anomie gas is 1,000 metric tonnes. Malaysia through Petronas has 60% equity shareholding, Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand each hold a 13% share while Singapore has a nominal one percent share.

3) *Agriculture Park, Sibiew (Formerly known as Divisional Extension Training and Development Centre)*

Bintulu is chosen by the State Government of Sarawak to establish Agriculture Park at Sibiew, 16 kilometres along Bintulu/Miri Road. The Park with an area of 500 hectares



*Agriculture
Park, Sibiew.*

provides a venue for the people of Sarawak and Malaysia to know more about our local vegetables, local fruits, local jungle products, local animals and fish. There are over 20 types of wild plants, an array of orchids, 77 types of fruits and flocks of sheep in the park. It has become an educational venue for students and farmers as well as tourist centre for both foreign and local tourists to Bintulu. The Chief Minister, YAB Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr.) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud officially launched the park in conjunction with the State Level Celebration of Yang Dipertuan Agong's Birthday held in Bintulu on 6.5.1990.

4) *Bintulu Wildlife Park (Taman Tumbina)*

Bintulu Wildlife Park or popularly known as Taman Tumbina is the zoological and botanical garden in Bintulu. Costing RM2,200,000.00, Bintulu Wildlife Park is the first and only park of its kind in Sarawak. It is situated at Tanjung Kidurong about 4 kilometres from the town and opened to the public since 2.10.1990. The Wildlife Park with an area of 12 hectares has collected almost all the wild animals and birds found in Sarawak and even a pair of tigers are imported from Peninsular Malaysia for the public to see. It is a living heritage and one of the most attractive tourist centres in Bintulu.

5) *Similajau National Park*

Located about 20 kilometres by sea from Bintulu, 7,067 hectare Similajau National Park was opened to members of the public since 1992. It is accessible both by speedboats/longboats which takes about 30 minutes or by a 6 kilometre road which takes about 15 minutes to reach the tropical park there. The Park offers sun, sand, forest, rapids and sea together with comfortable accommodation for tourists to relax and stay there. Similajau was gazetted as a national park in 1976 with the primary aim of conserving the flora, fauna and unique geological characteristics of the coastal area of Sarawak. Besides, it is the home of over 850 species of birds and 24 varieties of mammals. The well-known plants such as Tongkat Ali (*Eurycoma longisolia*) and Bintangor trees (*Barringtonia asiatica*) are found there.

6) *Tanjung Batu Beach*

It is a beautiful and clean beach facing South China Sea. Located about 4 kilometres from the town, the beach attracts not only the foreign tourists but also the local population to enjoy the fresh air, hot sun, clean sand and salty water at the doorstep.

7) Bintulu Deepsea Port, Kidurong

Bintulu Deepsea Port costing RM558 million was opened to the public since 1.1.1983. Bintulu Port is an all-weather port which provides the complete and modern facilities for both international and coastal vessels. It has an access channel measuring 6 kilometres long, 150 metres wide and 15 metres deep. It can handle big ships up to 200,000 tonnage. It was officially declared open by the then Yang Dipertua Negeri TYT Tun Datuk Patinggi Haji Abdul Rahman Ya'kub on 4.9.1983. On 26.6.1998, Bintulu Port Authority was awarded MS ISO 9002 for efficient port management.

With the completion of Bintulu International Container Terminal at the cost of RM280 million in 1998, Bintulu Port Authority could provide BICT quay of 450 metres of berth length divided into two container berths. It has 1,812 container ground slots and an additional open storage yard of 66,450 square metres apart from an operating capacity of 181,700 TEUS per annum. Hence, the port is now easier for port users to handle cargoes and oil palm tanker to meet Bintulu's industrial needs.

8) Kemena Industrial Estate

Under the supervision of Bintulu Development Authority (BDA),

Industrial Estate area is being developed at Kemena. It consists of an area of 424.50 hectares and is only 15 kilometres from the town. At the moment, there are not less than 20 joint-venture companies being set up there. The Estate was declared open by the then YAB Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Ghafar Baba.

9) Agricultural Plantation

Agriculture Development is a sunrise industry in the State. Hence, Bintulu having a hinterland of some 500,000 hectares of land suitable for agricultural and plantation industries, is the target area for the government to develop it. About 20,000 hectares of the hinterland have been planted with oil palms and some 900 hectares have been planted with cocoa. In the next 5 to 10 years, it is anticipated that at least 50,000 to 100,000 hectares of land will be opened up for oil palm plantations or other agricultural products by the new plantation companies.

10) Tourism Potential

Bintulu region has a lot of attractions for the tourists. Besides Similajau National Park, Tanjung Batu beach, Wildlife Park and other industrial areas, there are beautiful and traditional longhouses located along Kemena River to attract the tourists

to visit Bintulu. The world famous Niah Cave which is situated only 112 kilometres away by road from Bintulu is another attraction to woo the tourists to Bintulu Energy Town. Moreover, Tanjung Batu Coastal Reserve covering an area of 125 hectares is right in the heart of the town. The reserve has been developed into a beautiful and relaxing recreational and swimming area. In addition, an 18-hole golf course, public swimming lagoon and international hotels have also been built there to cater not only the local people but also foreign tourists.

11) Light Industrial Estate

Bintulu Development Authority realised that supporting services for the major industrial activities are necessary. Hence, BDA has developed two such estates namely Bintulu Light Industrial Estate and Kidurong Light Industrial Estate. The former has an area of 38 hectares and was set up mainly to cater for the needs of the local people whereas the latter which covers an area of 83 hectares caters the supporting services for the major industries and services related to Kidurong Port.

12) The Bintulu Edible Oils Sdn. Bhd.

The Bintulu Edible Oils Sdn. Bhd. is the first palm oil refinery and

fractionation plant being established in Sarawak. Costing RM18 million and located on a 6.6 hectare site at Tanjung Kidurong, the plant was declared open by the Chief Minister of Sarawak YAB Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr.) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud on 30.7.1992. The project is jointly owned by the Sarawak Land Development Board (SLDB) and two oil palm plantation companies, Perlis Plantation Bhd and Austral Enterprises Bhd. With a daily production capacity of 400 tonnes since its commencement in June, 1992, the BEO will cater for all the crude palm oil produced in Sarawak.

VIII. BDA NEW HEADQUARTERS

Situated along Bintulu/Miri Highway, the new headquarters of Bintulu Development Authority (BDA) which was completed in 1995, has become a new landmark in the booming town. The building has a unique shape. Some view it as a flying saucer while others see it as a "Terendak" (Melanau headgear) and a number of people looking at it as a sea shell. A few visitors even commented that the BDA new headquarters to the extend of comparing it as similar to the majestic Kuching City North Commission Building (DBKU) on the top of Bukit Siol at Petra Jaya. Whatever it is, BDA new headquarters, the seven-storey building located on the highest point of Bintulu Town offers a panoramic view of the whole town and its surrounding growth centre.

BDA is building Kidurong Library costing RM6.2 million. Situated just next to the Civic Centre, Bintulu, it will be one of the largest libraries in the State and it is a fully computerised public library to serve the population in Bintulu with greater efficiency.

IX. TATAU DISTRICT

1) *Tatau in General*

Formerly, Tatau was a sub-district of Bintulu District. When Bintulu was declared as a division on 1.1.1987, Tatau was upgraded from a sub-district to a district status on the same day. Tatau District covers an area of 4,946 square kilometres and based on 1991 Census, it had a population of 21,333. However, according to the Mid-Year Population Estimate 1999, Tatau District had a population of 27,500. The majority of them are the Ibans, followed by the Melanau, Chinese, Malays and Orang Ulu.

2) *The Origin of the name of Tatau*

The name "Tatau" actually derived from a race called "Tatau" in the district. According to a legend



The Headquarters of Bintulu Development Authority completed in 1995.



BDA Library Bintulu.

published in the Sarawak Gazette No. 1508 in July 1989, Tatau was the son of the first man and woman created by a supernatural being. The family stayed at Takan, the first point of the Tatau River. When Tatau grew up, he married to a beautiful lady called Malong who was

born in a Pedalai fruit. Tatau and Malong had many children. Brothers and sisters married each other. Since there was nobody else for them to marry, Tatau's grandchildren also intermarried among themselves and, hence, before Tatau died, he had many many descendants who stayed all over the district especially at Merebot, Jelai River, Tatau River and Sap River.

Another legend was that Tatau River was believed to be named by a Brooke's official. After the land from Oya River to Tanjung Kidurong was ceded to the Brooke Regime in 1861, an official was sent to the area to record the names of places. When he arrived at the present site of Tatau Town, he asked the local people "What is the name of the place?" The locals who did not know English answered, "Tak Tahu" ("Don't know") and hence, the Brooke official named the place "Tak Tahu". Eventually, it was pronounced as "Tatau" until today.



Tatau New Township.



District Office, Tatau.

3) *Establishment of Tatau Bazaar*

In 1884, Tatau Bazaar was first established by a group of Chinese Teochews who built 4 Attap shophouses at the opposite bank of the existing old Tatau Bazaar. In 1902, the shophouses were gutted by fire. In 1903, the new shophouses on stilt were built at the existing old

Tatau Bazaar and later on, 2 more shophouses were added in. However, in August, 1905, the bazaar was gutted by fire for a second time. In 1906, the whole Tatau Bazaar was rebuilt. In 1947, the first Chinese Primary School was established at one of the shophouses with only 20 students and one teacher. It was not until 1952 that the present Chinese Primary School was built at the present site to admit the increasing students including the native children in the surrounding areas. One magnificent Chinese Tuapekong Temple which is as old as the bazaar was also built at the side of the old Tatau Bazaar. Tatau is 62 kilometres from Bintulu by road and it is also accessible by river.



Tatau Old Town.



Tatau Old Town on fire on 30.11.1998.

4) *Agriculture Produce*

The main agriculture produce in the district are pepper, rubber, padi and coconut. Based on Tatau District Agriculture Statistics for the year 1996, 460 hectares of land were planted with pepper, 4,105 hectares were planted with rubber, 1,109 hectares planted with both wet and hill padi, 553 hectares were planted with coconut especially at DID Sungai Serupai area and 287

hectares planted with sago along the coastal area of Tatau.

5) *Tatau Today*

Today, Tatau has two towns. The old town which is situated along Tatau River consisted of 25 units of double-storey wooden shophouses, 12 units of double-storey concrete

shophouses, 2 units of three-storey concrete shophouses. There were altogether 39 units of shophouses in the old town. However, on 30.11.1998 at 2.45 a.m., a big fire gutted all the 25 wooden shophouses. The cost of damages was estimated in the region of RM3 million and it made 136 people homeless. The new township which is about half a kilometre from the old town is located near to Sibul/Bintulu Highway. The new township has more than 70 double-storey concrete shophouses. However, the shopkeepers are not happy with the overall planning of the new town because they "Tak Tahu" (do not know) why does the new township having a car parking area in the centre of the new town with all the shophouses facing outwards. One row is facing the jungle, two rows are facing the distant old Tatau town, one row is facing Tatau River and two other rows of the shophouses are facing each other. Hence, most of the shopkeepers have to close the frontage of the shophouses and open the back part of the shophouses for business. Moreover, there is no road access to the front of the shophouses. Another new township called Samarakan was launched on 24.5.1997 but the new township has not been implemented yet.

With the completion of Kemena Bridge costing RM15 million in 1983 and also Tatau Bridge, more vehicles and people pass through Tatau. Besides the new township of Tatau new government offices such as District Office, Agriculture Office, new Secondary School, Council New Market and other government agencies are being built one after the other. Moreover, a new Integrated Sport Complex is under planning and may be materialised within the next few years. Tatau Town is definitely booming and becomes one of the fast developing rural towns in Sarawak.

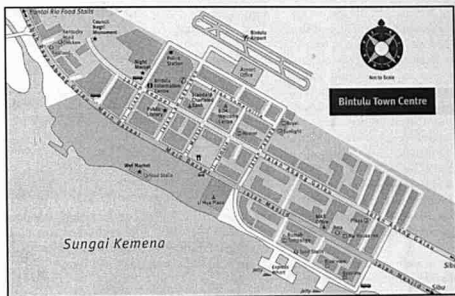
X. SILICA SAND, COAL AND TIMBER

Bintulu is well-known for the production of silica sand in the state. Large quantity of silica sand deposits are discovered along the



Examining silica sand deposit in Bintulu.

Locality map
of Bintulu
Town.



coastal areas between Sungai Similajau and Sungai Suai, Sungai Nyalau and Tanjung Kidurong. Deposits of silica sand suitable for glass manufacture have been discovered north of Bintulu. Mining of silica sand first began in 1976 in the Bintulu area. Most of the deposits were mined out by 1992 by the company, the Sebangun Private Limited based in Bintulu. Now the company has shifted its operation to the Suai and Bakong areas. To date, the amount of processed silica sand produced is about 4.3 million tonnes. In 1997, 203,000 tonnes of silica sand were produced by the plant in Bintulu and all were exported to Japan for making glass or other associated products.

Coal deposits near Bintulu have been known since 1913 and investigation by the Department of Geological Surveys showed that

coal seams, though numerous, are generally too thin to be mined profitably. At least 5 areas namely Sungai Segan, Kampung Jepak, Sungai Sepadok, Sungai Sera and Sungai Kelabat are identified as having economic potential. The coal resource of the Bintulu coal which is generally of coking quality with moderate swelling properties, is estimated at 20 million tonnes.

About 12.5 million hectares of Sarawak land is under forest, of which 3.4 million hectares or 27.2% are in Bintulu Division. This provides excellent opportunities for setting up timber industries for downstream processing of timber. At the moment, many timber related industries have successfully established their operations at Kemena and Jepak Timber Industrial Estates.

XI. BINTULU TODAY

The story of the rapid growth of Bintulu is a story of a region which is just the beginning to exploit in a planned way its tremendous natural resources both inland and offshore. It is a story of a place which 150 years ago was merely a small fishing village with a few hundred people only. In 1970s it was launched into limelight of international industrial circle. From the smell of Belacan which Bintulu was famous for, it is now being replaced by the more nauseatic pungent albeit natural gas and petroleum.

It is a story of an area where fishing, farming and trading once used to be the main sources of income but which are now being replaced by the major industries offering rapid economic development not only to Bintulu but also to Sarawak and Malaysia as a whole.

"Bintulu" may mean "head drying place" or "picking up head", but it is a place with heads for glory. One thing is obvious that the name "Bintulu" with an intriguing origin left no trace of it but the aura of its glory past may still linger in the area when one ventures cruising up the Iban populated areas along Kemena River.

It might be a "Pasar Belacan" one hundred and fifty years ago, Bintulu has been transformed from a fishing village into one of the fastest developing and industrial towns in Sarawak. It is not only rich in natural resources



Bintulu Stadium along Tanjong Kidurong Road.



A banking building in Bintulu Town Centre.

but also full of historical events and friendly multi-racial communities living together as members of a big family. Although it may still retain the old nick name "Pasar Belacan", most people will regard Bintulu as a highly industrial town in Sarawak as well as the leading prime industrial growth area in Malaysia.

Besides the rapid industrial growth, the oil palm plantation industry is developing at a rapid pace in Bintulu. Most of these plantations are located along Bintulu/Miri Road. These

include the Austral Enterprises planting 22,150 hectares, Imbok Enterprise planting 11,380 hectares, Sarawak Pulp Industry planting 7,000 hectares, Subur Mas Enterprise planting 5,000 hectares, Tawakal Sejati Plantation planting 4,000 hectares, Majrany Corporation planting 3,770 hectares, Sahu Enterprise planting 9,500 hectares, Hope and Hope Plantation and Golden Hope Plantation have also planted big areas of oil palm in the division. Apart from these, Keresa Sdn.

Bhd. has planted 2,000 hectares of rattan out of its 6,000 hectares at Tubau for rattan industry. Most of the land classified under productive agricultural land are planted with perennials such as rubber (12,700 hectares) pepper (820 hectares), coconut (1,185 hectares) and sago (785 hectares).

Bintulu Division has emerged two outstanding leaders namely:-

- 1) Datuk Penghulu Abok ak. Jalin who was elected as a member of Council Negri for Kemena on 15.7.1963 became the State Minister for Culture from 7.7.1970 to 9.9.1974.
- 2) Y.B. Dato Celestine Ujang ak. Jilan was elected as a member of Council Negri for Kemena on 9.9.1974 and became a State Minister for a number



Datuk Penghulu Abok ak. Jalin.



Y.B. Dato Celestine Ujang ak. Jilan.

of profolioes. He was the Speaker of Council Negri Sarawak from 26.3.1981 to 18.3.1987. Now he is the State Minister for Housing.

In 1980, the Aurora Beach Hotel which was the first international hotel being built to cater the local needs of foreigners coming and



*Masjid
Assyikirin,
Bintulu.*

working in Bintulu. However, the Aurora Beach Hotel building has been dismantled already. An 11 storey hotel known as ParkCity Beverly Hotel with 228 elegant rooms was completed at the cost of RM60 million. Now it has become a landmark of Bintulu at Tanjung Batu Road and it has commenced its business in July, 1998. Bintulu Golf Course is located about 8 kilometres off Bintulu Town. This 18-hole golf course provides most golfers a great challenge due to its undulating terrain with the breathtaking view of the South China Sea.

Bintulu is connected to Sibu by a 210-kilometre road and to Miri by a 225-kilometre road and, therefore, it lies more or less in the middle of two major towns in Sarawak. With the future rapid population growth expected in Bintulu Division, more industries will be located in Bintulu areas to supply the facilities to the three divisions namely, Miri, Bintulu and Sibu Divisions. This is due to the availability of a deep seaport at Tanjung Kidurong, Bintulu, existence of a good road transport network and the availability of commercial and industrial spaces in the town. The Bintulu Mosque known as Masjid Assyikirin (which means Gratefulness to God) was built in 1988 to reflect the gratefulness of the local residents for the gift



*ParkCity
Beverly Hotel
- Landmark
of Bintulu.*



*Chinese Fook
Teck Temple
in the centre
of Bintulu
Town.*

of natural resources - oil and gas that has allowed the town to evolve from a small fishing village to a major oil and gas town. The mosque costing RM6.5 million was declared open on 8.7.1988. The newly improved Chinese Fook Teck Temple and the new Kuan Yin Tong Temple have also added new colours to the town. The Civic

*Pasar Utama,
Bintulu.*



*Shophouses
along Jalan
Abang
Galau,
Bintulu.*



Centre Bintulu costing RM7,000,000.00 was completed and declared open by YAB Ketua Menteri Sarawak Tan Sri Datuk Patinggi (Dr) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud on 5.7.1988. The new modern double-storey hawker centre known as Pasar Utama was also built and put into use in January, 1992. Kemena Bridge costing RM15,000,000.00 and measuring 457

metres long was constructed and declared open by Ketua Menteri Sarawak YAB Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr.) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud on 13.12.1983. It is one of the longest bridges in Sarawak. The new RM100 million Bintulu New Hospital located on 34 hectares of hilly land along Jalan Nyabau, off Tanjung Kidurong is operational since 1.8.1999. The hospital has 298 beds with better equipment and it is designed to cater for the need of Bintulu people up to 2010. New Government Buildings are constructed along Tun Abdul Razak Road and Sultan Iskander Road. High raised commercial buildings are continuing to be built along Lebuhraya Abang Galau and Abang Galau Road. Along Tanjung Batu Road and Tanjung Kidurong Road, commercial centres and housing estates are booming up. Because of these developments, the face of Bintulu is continually transformed and its skyline has enhanced its image as a new developing town in Sarawak.

In 1894 there were only 8 units of wooden shophouses with Attap roof in Bintulu. After 105 years, Bintulu fishing village has changed itself into the third largest town in Sarawak after Miri Town and Sibu Town. According to a survey conducted in June 1999 there are 1,263 units of shophouses in Bintulu Town. The details are as follows:-

<i>No.</i>	<i>Locality</i>	<i>Type of shophouses</i>	<i>No. of Unit</i>	<i>Total</i>
1)	Bintulu Town Centre	1) 2-storey wooden shophouse	6	
		2) 2-storey concrete shophouse	59	
		3) 3-storey concrete shophouse	65	
		4) 4-storey concrete shophouse	388	
		5) 5-storey concrete shophouse	6	
			<hr/> 524	524
2)	Jalan Sultan Iskandar	1) 3-storey concrete shophouse	47	
		2) 4-storey concrete shophouse	6	
			<hr/> 53	53
3)	Kemena Jaya Commercial Centre, Jalan Sultan Iskandar	1) 3-storey concrete shophouse	36	36
4)	Medan Jaya Shopping Centre, Jalan Tun Hussein Onn	1) 3-storey concrete shophouse	180	180
5)	Tanjung Kidurong	1) 3-storey concrete shophouse	12	12
6)	ParkCity Area	1) 3-storey concrete shophouse	192	192
7)	Kampung Masjid	1) 4-storey concrete shophouse	14	14
8)	Kemena Commercial Centre, Tanjung Batu	1) 3-storey concrete shophouse	53	
		2) 4-storey concrete shophouse	199	
			<hr/> 252	252
Grand Total				<hr/> 1,263

The above figures do not include buildings belonging to Plaza Hotel (7-storey), ParkCity Beverly Hotel (11-storey), Hoover Hotel (6-storey), Li Hua Hotel (10-storey), BDA old Administrative Centre (3-storey), other industrial lots and other shophouses within the residential parks around the town.

It has to be admitted that Bintulu is the most rapid developing division in Sarawak. The new Bintulu is a premier, well-planned and environmentally attractive industrial town developed by the Bintulu Development Authority (BDA). The huge allocation and foreign investment in industries enhance rapid

industrialisation. Bintulu has really grown into a sprawling cosmopolitan centre of more than 100,000 people and one of the country's largest natural gas, wood and petrol-chemical industrial areas. Bintulu itself is full of energy and, hence, the nick name for Bintulu - the Energy Town of Sarawak is most appropriate and rightly given. Bintulu is obviously the emerging industrial dragon in Sarawak as well as in Malaysia. Eventually, the State Government's vision to develop Bintulu into a vibrant city with a new name of a "Garden Industrial City" is in the making and obviously, it will become a reality in the new millennium.

MIRI DIVISION

Map of Miri Division



Miri - The Oil Town of Sarawak

I. INTRODUCTION

Miri Division, the 4th Division of Sarawak, has an area of 26,777 square kilometres and based on 1991 census, it had a population of 232,655 of which the majority of them are the Chinese, Malays, Ibans, Orang Ulu and Melanaus. However, according to the Mid-Year Population Estimate 1999, Miri Division had a population of 299,100.

On 19.6.1882, Miri Division from Tanjung Kidurong to beyond Batang Baram, formerly part and parcel of Brunei Territory was ceded by the Sultan of Brunei to Brooke Regime. Hence, from that time onwards, Miri Division forms part of Sarawak Territory.

In 1882, the Divisional Headquarters of Baram Division was in Marudi, (Claude Town) about 90 kilometres from the sea. However, it was due to the discovery of oil in 1910 that Miri developed much faster than Marudi, the administrative centre was then shifted from Marudi to Miri in 1912. From that time onwards, Baram Division changed her name to Miri Division and Miri became the Divisional Headquarters of Miri Division until today.

Miri Division has three forts but the most famous fort was built at Claude Town (Marudi) during the Brooke Regime. It was called Kubu Hose built in 1901 in remembrance of Dr. Charles Hose who was the Resident of Baram in 1888. The highest mountain in Sarawak is Mount Murud in Miri Division. It is 2,424 metres above sea level. Baram River which flows through Miri Division is the second longest river in Sarawak. It is 400 kilometres long.

Prior to 1.1.1987, Miri Division had three districts namely Miri District, Baram District and Bintulu District. Nevertheless, when Bintulu was declared a



*Welcome to
Miri Town.*

division by YAB Ketua Menteri Sarawak, Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr.) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud on 31.8.1986, Miri Division remains two districts and four sub-districts from 1.1.1987 onwards.

<i>District</i>	<i>Sub-district</i>	<i>Population in 1991</i>
1) Miri District	1) Sibuti Sub-district	161,369
	2) Niah-Suai Sub-district	
2) Baram District (Marudi)	1) Long Lama Sub-district	71,286
	2) Bakong Sub-district (Beluru)	
Total:		232,655

There are altogether 17 towns/bazaars in the Division namely:-

- 1) Miri Town
- 2) Marudi Town (Claude Town)
- 3) Lutong Town
- 4) Kuala Baram Bazaar
- 5) Bekenu Bazaar
- 6) Batu Niah Bazaar
- 7) Sepupok Bazaar
- 8) Beluru Bazaar (Bakong Bazaar)
- 9) Niah Bazaar
- 10) Long Teru Bazaar
- 11) Lapok Bazaar
- 12) Long Lama Bazaar
- 13) Long Akah Bazaar
- 14) Bario Bazaar
- 15) Lambir Bazaar
- 16) Permy Jaya New Township, Tudan
- 17) Tanjung Nibong Bazaar

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

1) *Evidence of human inhabitants in 14th to 15th Century*

Miri may be a new settlement as far as the discovery of oil is concerned.

However, the recent discovery of artefacts Anamese Sukhotai's four eyelets jar, a water dropper and a Sawan Khalok oil jar unearthed near the mouth of a stream on the outskirts of Miri beared evidence of Siamese origin in the 14th to the 15th Century.

This discovery proves that the area had been

inhabited in the above period already. Moreover, prior to 1910, Orang Mirek and Malay settlements could be found along Sungai Miri.

2) *Datu Permaisuri's Tomb*

According to a legendary story related by the late Datu Temenggong Abang Kipali of Kuching, in the 15th Century Datu Merpati Jepang's wife Dayang Murdiah and his mother, Datu Permaisuri, died at Kuala Batu Buaya, Santubong. Using his supernatural power, Datu Merpati Jepang could carry their bodies across the sea to Pujut near Miri within a day and buried there. The burial stone is still sacred (Kramat) there.



*Aerial View
of Miri
Town,
1999.*

However, according to Encik William Chan in his book called "The Legend of the Princess Permaisuri's Tomb", Princess Permaisuri was a young and beautiful princess from Johore Empire. About one hundred years ago, she went on a cruise with her husband and family. As they approached Miri shore amidst a storm, their cruiser was capsized. The princess was washed ashore near Tanjung Batu at Pujut and was saved by the villagers there. In gratitude of her narrow escape, she relinquished her royalty for the life of a commoner, devoting the rest for her life teaching Islamic religion to the villagers. She was so zealous in her missionary that even her husband who later found her could not persuade her to return



*Datu
Permaisuri's
Tomb at
Kampung
Pujut
Tanjung
Batu, Miri.*

to Johore. She died and was buried by the villagers at the present site. Until today, the villagers still venerate her and pray to her at her tomb.

On 1.10.1996, the then Minister for Social Development Sarawak, Y.B.

*Lutung
Monkey
(Lutung
Berangad).*



Datu Haji Adenan Haji Satem visited the site and he approved a sum of RM30,000/- for the improvement, beautification and landscaping works of the area. In order to honour the old and historical tomb, it will be gazetted as a historical site by the State Government.

The tomb of Datu Permaisuri is actually located at a place which is ten minutes by longboat from Kampung Pujut upriver along Sungai Miri. A plankwalk and a name plate 'Makam Datu Permaisuri' have been constructed along the route from the river bank to the graveyard. A government secondary school in Miri known as Sekolah Menengah Kerajaan Datu Permaisuri is named after her.

III. ORIGIN OF THE NAME OF MIRI AND LUTONG

In the olden days, the earliest inhabitants

along Miri River were Orang Mirek. Generally, they referred themselves as "A-Likou Mirek" or "Likko Mirek". Originally, they were non-Muslims. However, due to the spread of Islam from 15th Century onwards in the region, they became Muslims. "A-Likou Mirek" or "Likko Mirek" means "people of Mirek River". Eventually, the name of the river Mirek pronounced as "Miri" until today.

Besides the name of Miri which came from "Orang Mirek", the original name of Canada Hill has no connection with a country called Canada in North America. The original name of Canada Hill was "Canda Hill" in Orang Mirek dialect. Slowly, it changes from "Canda Hill" to "Canada Hill" because it was named after the Canadian drillers who were drilling the oil well on the hill. There is a road called "Brighton Road" in Miri. Again "Brighton" in the Orang Mirek dialect means "valley".

Lutong, the famous oil refinery town in Miri Division, derived her name from a longtail monkey called "Lutong". Before the discovery of oil in Miri area in 1910, Lutong area consisted of thick jungle where wild animals especially monkeys were plentiful. Since the longtail monkeys called "Lutong" were everywhere in the jungle, the locals called the place "Lutong" until today. In 1959, Sarawak Shell Company built its headquarters in Lutong Town.

IV. MIRI IN THE EARLY DAYS

Before the discovery of oil in 1910, Miri was a small coastal fishing Kampung with about 20 scattered houses and a few shops. These included a small bazaar, a gambling

*Resident's
Office, Miri
in 1950s.*



*Aerial view of
Miri Town in
the 1950s.*



farm, a prawn shop and an Arab shop. The trade at that time consisted mainly of Jelutong, brassware, fish, Belacan and Budu. The inhabitants knew very little of the world beyond Miri due to difficulties in road and shipping communications in those days.

There were two Chinese provision dealers and their main trade was corned-beef, tinned milk and key beer. Eggs, bananas and

chickens were also available. The fresh meat was wild boar meat, buffalo meat and pigeons which were plenty at the sea beach area. Fresh fish was a popular food. Whenever fishing boats arrived, crowds of people rushed in to snatch anything they could lay their hands.

Miri settlement had actually been wrested out from the jungle where wild boars, monkeys and leopards used to run around. Rats swarmed the houses at night. Dysentery and malaria were common hazards in those days. The only doctor was stationed in Labuan. Hence, a small First-Aid Kit was kept in the camp with medicine for coughs, cholera and colds. Castor oil was very popular among the labour force to treat "Sakit Perut" or "Sakit Kaki" or "Sakit Demam".

Communications were backward in Miri. There were no roads, only dusty tracks with no street lamps. Everyone was advised to carry a hurricane lamp at night. When one European rode on a bicycle in Miri, the whole Kampung folks turned out in amazement to watch him. There were neither telegraph system nor telephone service in those days. For urgent messages, a special messenger came from Labuan via Brunei, taking 4 days and 4 nights by foot on the sea beach to deliver the message.



*Aerial view of
Miri Town,
1960.*

After the administrative centre was shifted from Claude Town (Marudi) to Miri in 1912, Miri began to develop at a faster rate as an oil town. The first Miri Resident's Office was built at the river bank along Kubu Road. It was a centre where the District Office, Post Office and other Government Agencies were located. The guard on duty at the office would strike a drilling pipe hourly to remind the people of the time and at 6.00 p.m. every evening, he would blow his bugle to signal the lowering of the flag.

In 1911, Oil Company set up one hospital in Miri to provide medical care to its workers as well as the general public who came for medical treatment. In view of the increasing

number of public patients, S.S.O.L. hospital was taken over by the Sarawak Government on 11.8.1960 in order to provide better medical service to everybody in the area.

In 1913, Miri Club and Gymkhana Club were formed by the Shell Company to provide a recreational and social venue for the staff and workers. In 1921, Miri Club and Gymkhana Club merged into one body but retained the name of Gymkhana Club. In 1924, Miri Golf Club was formed for the golfers. When the population grew, there was a need for spiritual comfort among the Miri people. In 1917, the Chinese Community established a Tuaepekong Temple. For the Christians, St. Columba's

Church was built and consecrated on 3.9.1922 for the Anglicans and on 24.4.1931 St. Joseph's Church was constructed and consecrated for its followers to worship.

Education was also a necessity in a growing town. In 1920, the first Chinese Chung Hua School was built to provide primary education among the Chinese children in the town as well as the children of the oil company. In 1924, Sekolah Melayu Anchi Miri was built to admit Malay students. In 1931, St. Columba's English School was established by the Anglicans and one year later, St. Joseph's Primary School was also opened to enrol children to study in English.

By 1921, there were about 40 wooden shophouses in Miri. In 1925, the Chinese traders felt that there was a need to group themselves together and, hence, they formed the Chinese Chambers of Commerce to look after their interest. In 1921, the first motor vehicle was driven in Miri Town and in 1924, the 7 Mile Miri/Lutong Road was completed and, hence, more motor vehicles were imported and driven in Miri. In 1931, outboard motors were used in Miri to provide coastal and riverine service. Air service was introduced to Miri upon the completion of Lutong Airfield in 1937 but it was only confined to oil company aircrafts to land.

When Miri Town was growing, there was a need to provide council service to the town. Hence, in 1933, Miri Local Council was established and on 1.1.1956 it was renamed as Miri Urban District Council. On 9.1.1961, the name was changed to Miri District Council. In 1981, the name was changed again and it was known as Miri Municipal Council until today.

During the World War II and especially towards the latter half of the Japanese Occupation, Miri was the target of air raids and bombings. After liberation in June, 1945, Miri Town was almost wiped out. The rehabilitation of the town was left in the hand of Colonial Government. At first wooden shophouses were erected at the existing site. However, from 1948 onwards, the wooden shophouses were dismantled and replaced by concrete shophouses. In December 1949, 2 rows of 14 units of double-storey concrete shophouses were built along the riverfront. Later on, another 14 units of similar shophouses were constructed. By 1951, most of the existing double-storey concrete shophouses along Jalan Cina, Jalan Kingsway and High Street were constructed. The Miri Council Central Market was also completed for petty hawkers. In 1957, Miri Theatre was built in the town to provide entertainment to the people there.

V. ORANG MIREK SETTLEMENT

Prior to the coming of outsiders to Miri in 1910, there were small isolated Kampung of Orang Mirek in the areas at Kuala Sungai Miri, Krokop, Bakam, Loak, Pujut and Piasau. These Kampung were situated along river banks and consisted of individual Atap houses. The inhabitants were farmers and fishermen. Today, Kampung Kuala Sungai Miri is no more in existence. However, other Kampung still exist although they now accommodate larger, ethnically mixed populations. Even at the present site of Kampung Dagang, there was a small Orang Mirek Kampung which was then known as Kampung Masjid.

*Temenggong
Datuk Muip bin
Tabib.*



According to Datuk Muip bin Tabib, an Orang Mirek himself, the Orang Mirek originally came from Long Miri in the Baram area more than 160 years ago and they had settled down in Miri for 6 generations already. They were being driven from their homes in the Baram by the hostile tribes. Linguistically, they belong to the Daloh dialect groups in Baram. They speak a language akin to the language spoken by Orang Bakong, Orang Narum and Orang Belait. A small number of this dialect group is also found in the Sibuti area.

In 1947 Census, Orang Mirek was counted separately. Later on, Orang Mirek was included in the Malay population because the Orang Mirek has a small

population. In 1977, there were about 2,495 Orang Mirek staying in Kampung Pengkalan, Kampung Bakam, Kampung Tanjung Batu, Kampung Kuala Adong, Kampung Tebangit, Kampung Seberang, Kampung Jalan Pujut, Kampung Lopeng Riam, Kampung Sungai Miri Kecil, Kampung Song and Kampung Dagang. In 1997, the estimated population of Orang Mirek was in the region of 5,000. In 1982, Orang Mirek formed an Association known as Persatuan Jatti Meirek, Miri, to look after the welfare and interest of the community. Now it has more than 600 members.

Except Orang Mirek, the majority of the Malays and the Melanau in Miri are not natives to the area. Most of them came from Kuching and Mukah areas following the opening up of the Miri oilfield. Others came from elsewhere in Miri Division, Bintulu Division, Brunei and some from as far away as Indonesia. Temenggong Datuk Muip bin Tabib was born in 1902 and died on 29.7.1988 in Miri. A road



*Masjid
At-Taoqwa,
Miri New
Mosque
along Jalan
Merpati.*

Miri Old Mosque built in 1955.



known as Jalan Datuk Muip and a primary school known as SRK Temenggong Datuk are named after this Orang Mirek leader in Miri.

VI. MALAY SETTLEMENT IN MIRI

Before Miri was ceded to Sarawak by Sultan of Brunei in 1882, Orang Kaya Imbil was the representative of Sultan of Brunei in Miri. He married to a Kenyah girl from Baram but later he passed away in Tutong. His son, Orang Kaya Miang succeeded his father and became the Sultan's representative in Miri. However, upon the death of Orang Kaya Miang, there was no representative being sent by Sultan of Brunei to Miri. The daily affairs were left in the hands of the Malay Tua Kampungs of the areas.

Upon the discovery of oil in Miri in 1910, more Malays from Kuching and Batang Rajang migrated over to Miri to work with the Oil Company. Some Malays also came from Brunei, Singapore, Sabah, Semenanjung Malaysia and even Indonesia to settle down in Kampung Dagang, Kampung Wireless,

Kampung Masjid and Kampung Pangkalan. Nakhoda Awang Gafar from Brunei was the first Malay who brought Islam religion to Miri and he built the first mosque made of Attap along Sungai Miri. In 1912 Sayed Othman bin Syed Zain from Sibu built the 2nd Miri Mosque and Madrasatul Usmaniah Malay School in Miri. In 1924, Sekolah Melayu Anchi Miri was opened. The 3rd Miri Mosque and SRK Agama Sekolah were constructed in 1955. In 1970, the Malay population was less than 10,000 but in 1991, their population had increased up to 34,714.

On 21.8.1983, the construction of Miri Mosque known as Masjid At-Taoqwa Miri was completed at the cost of RM3 million. It is the fourth but grandest mosque in Miri Town.

Most of the Kuching Malays and Mukah Melanaus migrated to Miri after World War II in 1945. Most of them were either working with the oil company or became fishermen and sailors. Today, the Malay population can be found in Kampung Dagang, Kampung Wireless, Kampung Pujut, Kampung Pulau Melayu, Kampung Pangkalan Lutong, Kampung Loak and some stay in Miri Town area.

Two roads namely Jalan Datu Merpati and Jalan Datu Permaisuri are named after the Malay hero and his mother and another road known as Jalan Setia Raja was named after the Melanau Hero Pehin Orang Kaya Setia Raja Abang Manai, the great grandfather of YAB

Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr.) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud, the Chief Minister of Sarawak who was born in Miri.

VII. IBAN COMMUNITY

Before Baram/Miri area was ceded to Brooke Regime in 1882, Ibans in Simanggang (Sri Aman) and Batang Rajang used to be attacked by Brooke's force. Hence, even before 1882, groups of Iban community migrated to Baram River. In 1884, big groups of Ibans from Skrang and Entebu migrated over to Dabai, Sungai Babi, Melikat and Sebatang areas. They settled down and became rubber tappers, pepper planters, padi farmers and jungle produce collectors.

In 1910 upon the discovery of oil in Miri, it attracted more Iban immigrants from Batang Lupar, Batang Rajang and Bintulu areas to move over and work in the oil fields. In 1970s, it was the timber industries boom in Batang Baram and Miri areas, more Ibans moved over to Miri. Today, the Iban community can be found in Kampung Api, Lutong, Taman Tunku, Kampung Sealine, Kampung Bersatu and Canada Hill squatter areas. Later on, the Iban community moved to Satap, Sungai Tiris, Nyallau, Sibuti and Niah areas where they settled down there.

In 1960s, Rumah Dayak Miri was built at Jalan Merpati to look after the welfare and interest of the Iban Community in Miri. In 1970, it was rebuilt and declared opened by Tun Datuk Patinggi Jugah ak Barieng on 30.5.1970. Its first Chairman was Encik Francis Loke followed by Datuk Edward Jeli ak

Belayong. Later, Encik John Linang took over from Datuk Edward Jeli when the latter became the State Minister. After John Linang, Donald Landong and Edwin Dundang became the Chairman one after another. The present Chairman is Dr. Nuing Jeluing. A road in Miri Town is named after Datuk Edward Jeli.

Based on census records in 1970, there were about 25,216 Ibans in Miri Division. In 1980, it jumped to 40,723 and in 1991 the Iban population increased up to 68,241.

VIII. CHINESE COMMUNITY

1) Migration of Chinese to Miri

In 1880, some Chinese Hokkien businessmen went to Claude Town (Marudi) to do business. At that time, Claude Town was the administrative centre of the division whereas Miri was a small fishing village. It was only after the Brooke



Chan Chak.

Regime took over Baram/Miri area from the Sultan of Brunei in 1882 that some Chinese came over to Miri. Upon the oil discovery in Miri in 1910 and the shifting of the administrative centre from Claude Town to Miri in 1912 more Chinese rushed over and settled down there.

In 1887, the Miri fishing village had about 10 to 20 houses. However, most of the population were Orang Mirek staying on both sides of Kuala Sungai Miri. The Chinese who came to Miri opened small provision shops for business. At first there were two Chinese shops and later it increased to four shops. One of the famous Chinese headmen in Miri was Chan Chak. He died in 1927 and a road known as Jalan Chan Chak in Miri was named after him.

Slowly, Chinese workers from China, Hong Kong and Singapore were being employed in various fields in the oil town. The poor Chinese especially from Guangdong Province of China came in big groups to work in the oil fields and subsequently settled down in Miri. Today, most Chinese in Miri are businessmen, contractors, food suppliers and developers whereas some of them

became government officers or oil field workers. In the rural areas, they are estate owners, farmers and timber loggers.

The Chinese population in Miri District have been growing steadily from 1910 onwards. The breakdown figures are as follows:-

<i>Year</i>	<i>Chinese Population</i>	<i>Remark</i>
1939	9,846	
1947	9,465	Due to 2nd World War, Chinese population dispersed to other areas
1960	16,432	
1991	51,397	

Most of the Chinese population are Hakka (Kheh), Foochow and Hokkien. Based on 1991 census, the breakdown figures are as follows:-

<i>Chinese Dialect</i>	<i>Population</i>
Hokkien	8,939
Hakka (Kheh)	20,993
Foochow	11,798
Cantonese	4,228
Toechew	2,214
Others	3,225

Total:	51,397



Datuk Chia Chin Shin.



Y.B. Datuk Peter Chin Fah Kui



*Y.B. Datuk Amar Dr. George Chan
Hong Nam.*

2) Chinese Tuapekong Temple, Miri

In the early days, Miri was lack of medical facilities and, hence, there were a lot of infectious diseases. Upon the advice from a Buddhist monk, Kapitan China Chan Chak built the Tuapekong Temple in Miri in 1917. During the second World War, the temple was gutted by fire due to bombings. The Sarawak Government gave a piece of land containing 0.26 acres for the temple to be rebuilt. In 1970, with the assistance from both the Federal Government and the State Government, a new Chinese Tuapekong Temple was completed at the present site at the cost of RM180,000/-. It was declared open on 24.5.1972.

3) Outstanding Chinese Leaders in Miri

There are a few outstanding Chinese leaders in Miri, namely:-

- 1) Datuk Chia Chin Sin was a councillor of Miri Municipal Council in 1951 and in 1963, he was a member of Council Negri. On 26.3.1981 he was appointed as the State Assistant Minister for Welfare. In 1991, he was appointed as the Chinese Temenggong for Miri Division until today.
- 2) Y.B. Datuk Peter Chin Fah Kui, Member of Parliament of Miri is the Deputy Federal Minister for Housing and Local Government. He was the Chairman of Miri Municipal Council from 1984 to 1987.

*Chinese
Tuapengkong
Temple,
Miri.*



*Dr. Charles
Hose.*

- 3) Y.B. Datuk Amar Dr. George Chan Hong Nam, Member of Council Negri of Piasau from April, 1987 is the Deputy Chief Minister, Minister for Finance and Public Utility as well as Minister for Social Development of Sarawak. He was the Chairman of Miri Municipal Council from 1981 to 1984. Datuk Amar Dr. George Chan was first elected as a Member of Parliament in Miri in 1982 and in 1983, he was elected as a Member of the Council Negri for Piasau until today. Now he is the President of Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP) with effect from 1997.

IX. DISCOVERY OF 'EARTH OIL'

The first oil well in Sarawak was drilled on the top of Canada Hill, Miri on

10.8.1910. The Well No. 1 now known as "Grand Old Lady" has become the well-known landmark and tourist attraction in Miri.

In actual fact, the first discovery of oil in Miri was recorded by Mr. Claude de Crespigny, the then Resident of Baram on 31.7.1882. In his diary, he mentioned that oil being discovered in some 18 wells dug by hand by the local inhabitants around Miri area. At that time, the locals called the oil "Earth Oil" or "Minyak Tanah". Ever since, the oily substance appeared in seepages and the local people used the oil mixed with resin for caulking boats. They even used it for lighting, employing an open wick but invariably caught fire which resulted burning of their houses. In those days, the local people believed that "Earth Oil" was possessed by "Hantu" or Ghost which had the supernatural power to burn down houses.

Although De Crespigny recommended to the second White Rajah of Sarawak, Sir Charles Brooke for further investigation of the discovery of "Earth Oil" (petroleum) in 1882, nothing was done as the demand for petroleum in Sarawak was nil.

In 1888, when Dr. Charles Hose took over the duties of Resident of Baram from De Crespigny, he took seriously for the search of the oil in the whole area. Claude Town (now Marudi) was his first station when he joined the Sarawak civil service. With his predecessor's notes, he further explored and mapped the seepages in the Baram Division. After the discovery of a number of oil shows, he reported to the Sarawak Government and later he arranged the Anglo-Saxon Petroleum to develop Sarawak's oil resources. On 10.8.1910, the first well was spudded on the top of Canada Hill. On 22.12.1910, oil was struck at 425 feet and brought into production. By 1914, oil from Sarawak was being used in ships of the British and Japanese navies. It had to be acknowledged that Dr. Charles Hose was the virtual discoverer of Sarawak's oil.

X. MIRI DURING WORLD WAR II

By 1940 the oil field in Miri produced just over one million barrels during the year. By then, however, the operators were less concerned with producing oil rather than closing down the field in case of enemy invasion.

Second World War found two opposing forces who tried to influence the

flow of Miri oil. On one side were the Allies (and the Company), determined to keep the oil in the ground. On the other side were the Japanese invaders who equally determined to get the oil out from the earth.

Soon after the bad news of Pearl Harbour being taken over by the enemy, the first Japanese planes were seen making reconnaissance flights over Miri and Lutong. Immediately Company officials, with the help of the tiny garrison stationed in Miri, put Operation Denial into force. All producing wells were sealed up, vital equipment and machinery were dismantled and shipped off to Singapore together with skilled workers and important Company papers. The Company was determined to deny the invaders of all possible means of producing oil. Busy with the Denial Scheme, the Company officials themselves had barely time to leave on the three ships which were to take them to Kuching. They were attacked from the air on their voyage.

On 16.12.1941, a mere nine days after the fall of Pearl Harbour, a Japanese invasion force of about ten thousand men landed at Tanjung Lobang. And a few months later, not long after the fall of Singapore, they landed at Miri a large number of skilled, experienced oil field workers, accompanied by the very same oil field equipment and machinery which had been sent over to Singapore just before the invasion. The Japanese had managed to find out exactly where were both men and machinery were hidden in Singapore and had

promptly brought them back to Miri. The Japanese made strenuous efforts to bring the oilfield back into production. During the three and a half years' occupation, they produced three quarter of a million barrels, their peak production occurring in 1944.

In 1944, living conditions in Miri had seriously deteriorated. Towards the latter half of the Japanese Occupation, Miri and Lutong became the target of innumerable air raids - systematic bombing. Food, clothes and medicines were scarce; sickness and malnutrition rife. Those who worked for the Oil Supplying Service were marginally better off. They got regular rations of food, even though rice was being substituted by sweet potatoes and Ubi Kayu with alarming frequency, even though they were not free from tribulation. It was not at all unusual, after a hard day's work on the oil field and at the refinery, to be made to work on the construction of the Lutong bridge and the Lutong airstrip.

At the cemetery site near to St. Columba Kindergarten, Miri, a memorial was erected at the side of Jalan Dato Abang Indeh. There were 28 people mostly government officers, teachers, priests and oil company workers who were suspected to form anti-Japanese movement in 1945 were killed and buried there. Originally, the memorial was erected with a piece of wood for remembrance. In 1980, it was replaced by a concrete memorial post.



*War memorial
monument
along Jalan
Dato Abang
Indeh in
Miri.*

XI. REHABILITATION AFTER THE WAR

On 10.6.1945, the Australian troops occupied Labuan Island. Within 11 days, they landed on the mainland and liberated Miri as well as Seria. They were met by a scene of devastation-blazing wells, demolished buildings and wrecked installations. The main task then was to resume oil production.

Although hostilities ceased on the 2.9.1945, some of the Japanese forces, a few miles behind Miri, did not capitulate until much later. Nevertheless, work had to go on, bringing the burning wells under control and

clearing away the debris. Progress was handicapped by lack of equipment and materials, especially on transport units and welding sets.

The rehabilitation of the Miri and Seria Fields was carried out with assistance of the Australian Army engineers. To blanket the flames, steam was raised in some handy Japanese boilers and from the wells. In many cases, the Japanese had dug pits around the well-heads and these had filled with flaring oil, making it difficult to approach. Naturally many men were needed for the fire-fighting operations. Those Company workers who had left behind during the war were obvious candidates for the job. Many Company workers, like Miri inhabitants, had fled into the jungle during the war; they were encouraged to come out by means of friendly aircraft dropping leaflets with news of the liberation.

By September 1945 all the fires were put out. Attention now turned to clearing up the general mess, repairing the storage tanks, the main trunk line between Seria and Lutong and sea-loading facilities. The only equipment available was borrowed from the Army. However, by November 1945 the Army was able to evacuate the oil field areas. The first storage tank in Lutong was satisfactorily repaired and tested, and on 11.12.1945, oil began to flow again in the Seria-Lutong pipeline.

It was not until October 1946 that any appreciable output was achieved. At the end of October, nearly 6,000 barrels were produced. By the end of the year, the

rehabilitation staff were looking back with satisfaction on twelve months of very substantial progress, inspite of the stark living conditions they had had to endure. Food was scarce and cigarettes, tobacco and drinks were supplied through army sources on a strict army-ration basis. Tinned food was received in reasonable quantities from Australia, but there was, for some time, a serious shortage of dairy produce. The health situation was never good, the incidence of malaria being quite high.

By the end of August, 1946, the first well drilled at Miri since the Japanese withdrawal, was completed at 3,346 feet with a regular production of 420 barrels per day. The rebuilding of the Lutong refinery, the testing and replacement of sea-lines had, of course, been going on concurrently with the resuscitation of the oil wells. There remained a shortage of labour which at times caused serious problems and the food situation, although greatly improved over the previous years, still left much to be desired. There were transportation worries and deliveries were still far from regular.

However, one major change to pre-war days was the move of Shell's exploration and production headquarters from Miri to Seria arising from the realisation that the Seria Field was a million barrel oil field and the only one in North West Borneo. On the other hand, Miri Oilfield was declining and that in spite of extensive exploration, no new oilfields had been found in Sarawak. The Refinery remained in Lutong as a facility for both Miri and Seria.

*Well No. 1.
The first oil in
Sarawak was
struck here in
1910.*



XII. THE GRAND OLD LADY OF MIRI

The Oil Well of Miri known as "The Grand Old Lady" is situated on the top of Canada Hill. The hill is a limestone ridge overlooking Miri town and offering excellent views of Miri town and the surrounding areas. On 1.10.1972, the Miri Field was closed down. Production of the Miri Field had never, of course, returned to the pre-war levels. It had been obvious from the sharp drop in the figures between 1929 and 1935, from five and a half to two million barrels, that the reservoirs were running down. In the post-war years only once, in 1964, did production pass the 500,000 barrels mark. At the beginning of 1972, only

90 wells of 623 drilled during the history of the field were still pumping. Production had fallen to 450 barrels per day, and was dropping rapidly. After 62 years of production, the oil reserves in the Miri field were exhausted and Sarawak Shell had no alternative but to close it down. During the last month of operation, one of the wells still creaking slowly up and down was that same well that began the saga of Miri Well No. 1.

The "Grand Old Lady" of Miri had had a remarkable record over her 62 years of life. She had operated almost non-stop from 22.12.1910, when she had first brought onto production, until she was closed down in 1941 due to war action. During that time, she had produced 563,484 barrels and was still producing 10 barrels per day. Within the three and a half years of Japanese occupation, Well No. 1 worked for only 12 months during which she produced 4,371 barrels. The well was undamaged at the end of the war, and was rehabilitated on 12.3.1947 with an initial production of 9 barrels per day. At the close, she was still managing to produce 3 barrels of oil a day and when finally stopped, had produced over 650,000 barrels of oil.

Miri No. 1's derrick involved herself in a bush fire four months later. Fortunately, this was extinguished in good time, for it was never intended that the Grand Old Lady of Miri should end her days in ignominy. Of all the wells in Miri she alone had not been removed. Soon she was to be restored to her old self again and on 1.10.1973, after one year in retirement, she was handed over to the Sarawak Government to be kept in perpetuity

as an historical monument in the State. Now the "Grand Old Lady" being the old rig in Sarawak has become the symbol and landmark of Miri.

XIII. MIRI DISTRICT AND PLACES OF INTEREST

1) *Miri in General*

Miri Town is the Divisional Headquarters of Miri Division since 1912. In the olden days, it was a small fishing village but after oil was discovered in 1910, Miri is well-known as the Oil Town of Sarawak. Miri town is sited at the mouth of Miri River. The river has a shallow bar which prevents all but small coastal vessels from entering, and the shallow coastal waters force large ships to anchor about five kilometres out to sea. General cargo is handled by lighter and oil from the Lutong refinery and storage tanks is loaded through underwater pipes.

Miri District has an area of 4,707 square kilometres and had a population of 173,313 based on 1991 Census. However, in 1999 according to the Mid-Year Population Estimate, Miri District had a population of 208,700. During the last few years, there was a dramatic increase in population due to influx of job seekers and contract workers from other parts of the State.

Plantations and construction sectors attract a lot of people from other

divisions as apparent with the increase of housing estates and traffic flow in Miri Town.

2) *Miri Development*

Miri Town is rapidly expanding its business as a commercial centre. It is located in North-East Sarawak close to the Brunei border. In recent years Miri has become a major tourist gateway and the jumping-off point for some of Sarawak's world famous National Parks such as Niah Cave, Gunung Mulu and Lambir Hills. Other interesting destinations include the Kelabit Highland, the Headhunters' Trail from Mulu to Limbang and of course the 'Grand Old Lady' on the Canada Hill, Miri.

The town is fast becoming an important tourism destination in its own right, and plans are in hand to transform it into a resort city. Construction has already started on the new Miri Waterfront costing RM200 million, and this will be followed by a world-class Marina. Miri has four excellent luxury hotels and more than 30 medium class hotels in all price categories, and probably the best selection of food outlets in Borneo. Combine this with vibrant night-life, bustling native markets, traditional longhouse culture and a number of popular beaches nearby, Miri makes an ideal base for exploring the National Parks and a great place to relax for a few days after the jungle trekking.

3) *Places of interests around Miri Town*

a) *Hawaii Beach*

It is located at Kampung Bakam, a 15 minute drive from Miri. The entrance is in the village next to the bus stop, and a wooden foot-bridge leads the visitors to the palm-fringed beach.



The famous Long Jetty at Jalan Peninsular.

b) *Tamu Muhibbah*

The Tamu is a colourful native market where a range of exotic fruits and vegetables, handicrafts and produce from upriver areas, including fragrant "Bario Rice" are available on sale.

c) *Taman Selera*

It is a popular food centre and an ideal spot for watching the sunset on Brighton Beach. The beach here is popular for joggers and Tai Chi exponents in the mornings.

d) *The Long Jetty*

The jetty is located on the peninsula across the Miri River. Visitors can reach there by taking a free ferry from Jalan Kubu. A nice place for a stroll, and a popular fishing spot. The whole town seems to come out to watch the sunset here.

4) *Places of interests beyond Miri Town*

a) *Lambir Hills National Park*

It is one of the most accessible parks by road and easily accessible national parks in Malaysia. Only 32 kilometres from Miri, it comprises of 6,952 hectares of sandstone hills, covered with dipterocarp and heath forest. Recent studies suggest that Lambir Hills have the greatest level of plant biodiversity in the world! Besides plant life, the forest is inhabited by gibbons, tarsiers, flying lizards, pangolins, wild boars and various types of deer, as well as 157 different species of birds. Most of the wildlife is very shy, although the calls of many animals can be heard. Due to its rugged terrain, Lambir Hills with the highest peak rises 450

metres above sea level are also dotted with attractive waterfalls, which are at their best after a rainfall. The Park was gazetted as a National Park on 26.6.1975.

b) *Gunung Mulu National Park-The World's 9th Wonder*

The Park which was gazetted as a National Park in 1974 is one of Nature's most spectacular achievements of Sarawak's expanding network of national parks and it is accessible by river and by air. It is also the largest national park, covering 52,866 hectares of primary rainforest, which is criss-crossed by fast flowing rivers and clear jungle streams. Mulu is dominated by three mountains - Gunung Mulu (2,376 metres), Gunung Api (1,750 metres) and Gunung Benarat (1,585 metres). Yet many of Mulu's greatest attractions lie deep below the surface. Hidden underneath the forested slopes of these mountains is one of the largest limestone cave systems in the world.

This system, a breath-taking natural wonder, contains a



*Royal Mulu
Resort.*

number of record breaking caves. With the world's largest cave passage (Deer Cave), the world's largest natural chamber (Sarawak Chamber), and the longest cave in Southeast Asia (Clearwater Cave), it is not surprising that Mulu is now world-famous. Over 200 kilometres of cave passages have been surveyed but this is thought to represent just 30-40% of the actual total.

The oldest of Mulu's caves started to form about 5 million years ago when sideways earth movements resulted in the formation of both limestone and sandstone mountains, lying side by side. Millions of years of heavy rain and the action of rivers and running water carved out the vast subterranean system that exists today.

There are three adventure treks and one show cave in Gunung Mulu National Park.

The Pinnacles of Gunung Api

Located in a shallow valley 1,200 metres above sea level, the famous Mulu Pinnacles consist of a series of 45 metres high, razor-sharp limestone spikes that tower above the surrounding vegetation, mid-

way up the slopes of Gunung Api. The trek to view them is one of the most popular routes in the park but the Pinnacle Summit Trek is a tough and challenging one. The trail itself is very steep (near vertical in parts) and requires a certain level of fitness.

Gunung Mulu Summit Trek

The climb to the summit of Gunung Mulu (2,376 metres) is the toughest organised trek in the park. It requires a high level of fitness and a sense of adventure. Indeed, Gunung Mulu has always attracted adventurers. In the 19th Century, Mr. Spenser St John and Dr. Charles Hose, attempted to conquer Mount Mulu. They and other explorers and mountaineers failed. It was not until the 1920's, when a Berawan rhino hunter named Tama Nilong discovered the 'south-west' ridge, that a way to the summit was found. In 1932, Tama Nilong led Lord Shackleton and an Oxford University Expedition to the summit of Mulu.

The Headhunter's Trail

The Headhunter's Trail is a great way of entering or leaving Gunung Mulu National Park. The trek is organised by travel operators and combines primitive travel, jungle trekking and an

Map of
Gunung
Mulu,
National
Park



*The Statue
of Abraham
Lincoln at
the entrance
of Deer
Cave, Mulu.*



overnight stay at an Iban longhouse. The trail itself follows the route taken by Kayan headhunting parties who paddled up the Melinau River to the Melinau Gorge. They then dragged their longboats through the forest for 3 kilometres until they reached the banks of the Terikan River, where they launched headhunting raids against the people of the Limbang area.

Mulu Show Caves

Mulu's four Show Caves were selected for their uniqueness or sheer beauty. They are accessible by plankwalks and well-lit concrete

paths. Strategically positioned spotlights highlight the unique features of the individual caves. A plankwalk leads through the forest to Deer Cave and Lang's Cave whilst Clearwater Cave and Wind Cave are reached by taking a longboat up the Melinau River, or by following a 4 kilometre natural trail.

Deer Cave is reached by following a three kilometre plankwalk. There is much to see on the way to the cave, including some superb rainforest, jungle streams and an ancient Penan burial cave.

Deer Cave is the largest cave passage in the world. It is just over 2 kilometres in length and never less than 90 metres high and wide. The main chamber, which is partially lit by sunlight, is 174 metres wide and 122 metres high. This is the area where deer used to shelter and, hence, the local Penan and Berawan people named the cave as Deer Cave.

A path leads into the cave and winds its way around, following the natural contours of the cave floor. Although the path is lit, a flashlight is useful for examining the guano-covered cave floor and its population of insects. The path eventually leads to the "Garden of Eden" where a hole in the cave roof lets in a shaft of light which allows the rich green vegetation to thrive. Another feature is the famous profile of Abraham Lincoln of U.S.A. which guards the southern entrance of the cave.

Deer Cave is the home to many species of bats. Between 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. if the weather is fine, visitors may be treated to the spectacular sight of a black cloud of free-tailed bats emerging from the entrance of the cave to go in search of food. Originally, this cloud was thought to contain hundreds of thousands of bats but a recent study suggests that the figure is well over a million.

A visit to Deer Cave is usually combined with one to Lang's Cave, whose entrance is a short distance away from that of Deer Cave. Lang's Cave, named after the man who first introduced spelologists to the cave in 1978, is the smallest of the show caves but its rock formations are well worth seeing. These are made all the more attractive by the strategically positioned spotlights which highlight stalactites and stalagmites. As the cave is relatively small and well-lit, it offers good opportunities to see some of its inhabitants such as bats, swiftlets and even cave-dwelling snakes.

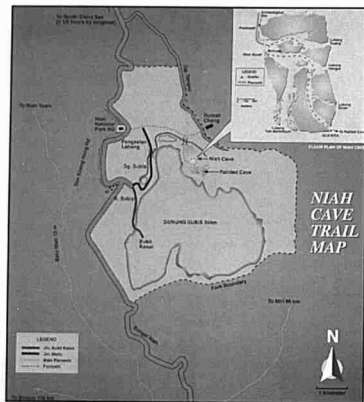


*Niah Cave,
Miri.*

c) *Niah Cave*

Located within Niah National Park containing an area of 3,140 hectares, the Great Niah Cave is no doubt that it is one of the world's largest caves and it is accessible by 107 kilometre road from Miri. Its gaping mouth (the West Mouth) is over 60 metres high and nearly 250 metres wide. The West Mouth is the site of some of the most important archaeological discoveries in Southeast Asia. The site was first investigated in 1957 by Sarawak Museum. Excavations outside the West Mouth revealed layers of human artefacts (bone and stone tools, cooking utensils and ornaments) reaching back to the Palaeolithic era. The most

*Niah Cave,
Trail Map.*



sensational discovery, in early 1958, was an intact human skull estimated to be 40,000 years old. This discovery was not readily accepted by most of the scientific community, who felt that Borneo was settled by modern men much later. However, recent discoveries in Australia and modern dating techniques suggest the

discovery at Niah Cave was right. Just inside the West Mouth, along the left hand wall, is a site that has been used as a cemetery since the earliest human settlements. The types of burials range from simple shallow graves to sophisticated ritual burials in coffins or urns with accompanying grave goods such as pottery, mats and textiles. These different types of burial suggest that the cemetery was used from the earliest Palaeolithic era until the bronze age. Isolated burial sites have also been found inside the cave. Because of these valuable finds, the entire cave system is now under the protection of the Sarawak Museum.

The plankwalk passes through a narrow passage to a second large chamber, known as the Padang, where shafts of sunlight enter through fissures in the cave roof, giving a truly spectacular view. After the Padang the cave narrows and becomes pitch black, but with a strong torch one can see many interesting rock formations. After a short walk the plankwalk leads out into the open and on to the Painted Cave.

*Landmark of
Bekenu - Oil
Palm Fruit.*



The Painted Cave also has an important burial site (to the right of the entrance), but from a much later era. Here, the deads were placed in boat-shaped coffins for the journey into the afterlife. The cemetery was probably used as recently as 1000 A.D. The remains and coffins have been removed to the safe custody of the Sarawak Museum, but the paintings that give the cave its name can still be seen. The paintings, made with red haematite run in a long narrow strip along the wall

behind the fenced-off burial area. They are quite faint. They mostly depict boats filled with human figures, making the hazardous journey to the land of the deads.

At sunset, two enormous black clouds entering the great cave and leaving the West Mouth. Whilst 16 million bats are heading out to feed in the forest, 4 million swiftlets are returning to their nests. A truly unforgettable sight. Niah National Park was declared as the National Park in 1974 although the caves were declared as a National Historic Monument as long as 1958.

d) Niah Site Museum

Niah Site Museum which is located at Pangkalan Lobang was opened to members of the public on 31.8.1998. The museum displays all the archaeological heritages unearthed from the Niah Caves, including a 40,000 year old human skulls found at the Western Mouth of the Great Cave and a replica of the Painted Cave where the only red haematic rock paintings in Borneo of at least 1,000 years old was found.

*Bekenu New
Bazaar.*



5) *Sibuti Sub-District*

Sibuti is the sub-district of Miri District and based on 1991 census, it had a population of 12,179. Bekenu Bazaar is the sub-district headquarters of Sibuti and it is 63 kilometres by road from Miri. Bekenu Bazaar was first established by the Chinese Chao Ann on the opposite bank of the existing bazaar in 1895. At first there was only one Attap shophouse. By 1925, there were already 18 units of wooden/Attap shophouses in Bekenu Bazaar and Chung Hua Primary School was built in 1926. However, in 1933 the whole bazaar was gutted by fire. A few

years later 25 units of wooden shophouses were rebuilt at the same bazaar site. In 1945, Allied Forces came and bombed Bekenu Bazaar in order to chase away the Japanese invaders who occupied the area since 1941. Again the whole bazaar was burned to the ground. In 1951, the Colonial Government established the present Bekenu Bazaar at the existing site. Today there are 66 double-storey concrete/semi concrete shophouses and 16 three-storey uncompleted concrete shophouses in Bekenu. In view of the fact that Sibuti area has planted plenty of oil palms, the symbol of Bekenu is the oil-palm fruit.



*Batu Niah
Bazaar.*

*Landmark of
Batu Niah-
Birds' Nest.*



6) Niah-Suai Sub-district

Niah-Suai is another sub-district of Miri District and based on 1991 census, it had a population of 27,422. Niah Bazaar is the headquarters of Niah-Suai Sub-district and it is about 112 kilometres by road from Miri. Niah Bazaar was established by the Chinese Chao Ann on the opposite bank of the existing bazaar in 1890. At first there were only 6 wooden shophouses on stilt. In 1922, Chung Hua Primary School was established in Niah. In 1989, the old wooden shophouses were dismantled and moved over to the existing Niah Bazaar site. Today there are 18 units of double-storey concrete shophouses in Niah Bazaar.

11 kilometres away from Niah Bazaar is another bigger bazaar known as Batu Niah Bazaar and the bazaar was established after the Second World War. At first, there was only a shophouse but slowly it increased to 4. Up to 1978, there were 15 units of double-storey wooden shophouses but after 1978, all the 15 units of wooden shophouses were replaced by concrete shophouses. Today there are 127 units of double-storey and 3-storey concrete shophouses in Batu Niah Bazaar. The symbol of Niah-Suai Sub-district is the Bird-nests because Niah Cave produces large quantity of birds' nests.

XIV. BARAM DISTRICT (MARUDI)

1) Historical Background

Marudi Town is the administrative headquarters of Baram District and it is about 68 kilometres from Kuala Baram. Based on 1991 Census, it had a population of 71,286, the majority of them are Orang Ulu (the Kayan, the Kenyah, the Kelabit, the Penan, the Berawan, the Kiput, the Sebop, the Bisaya, the Seping and the Saban) followed by Ibans, Chinese and Malays. However, based on the Mid-Year Population Estimate 1999, Baram District had a population of 90,400. It has two sub-districts namely Bakong and Long Lama in Ulu Baram. Baram District has an area of 22,070 square kilometres and it is therefore the biggest district in Sarawak in term of area.

*Aerial view
of Marudi
Town.*



Before 19.6.1882, Batang Baram was part and parcel of Brunei Territory. In 1874, Kenyah and Kayan communities stirred up Anti-Brunei Movement because the Brunei authority imposed heavy taxes on them. In the end, the Brunei authority was being chased out from Batang Baram and on 19.6.1882 the area was ceded to the Brooke Regime of Sarawak. The first Resident in the person of Mr. Claude de Crespigny was sent over from the Brooke Authority to administer Baram area. Hence, the new administrative centre for the Baram area was named

after the Resident and called "Claude Town". Rows of wooden shophouses with Attap roof were built on 17.7.1882. The foundation of Claude Town was laid on 19.7.1882. An administrative office was established on a little hilltop at Claude Town in 1883. In 1901, Fort Hose was built at Claude Town and it was named after Dr. Charles Hose who was the Resident of Baram in 1888. At that time Baram was a dense jungle with rushing rivers and high mountains with the scene of fierce local tribal conflicts.

*Civic Centre,
Marudi.*



2) Administrative Centre moved to Miri

In 1910, oil was discovered in Miri and hence, the development in Miri was faster than Claude Town. In 1912, the administrative centre of the division was shifted to Miri. Why did the name "Claude Town" being changed to "Marudi". According to a legend, upon the transfer of administrative centre from Claude Town to Miri, people from Miri always teased the people especially the Ibans around Claude Town in Iban language, "Malu Dek, Kubu Claude Town udah pindah ngagai Miri" which means "Ashamed of you, your fort (administrative centre) has been moved to Miri". As time passed, the local people preferred to call Claude Town as "Malu Dek" and slowly it was

pronounced as "Marudi" until today. A small river known as Sungai Marudi is flowing between Marudi Town and Fort Hose.

3) Baram Regatta and Peace-Making

The first Baram Regatta was organised in 1890. However, the most outstanding Regatta was organised by Dr. Charles Hose during his tenure as the Resident of Baram from 6.4.1899 to 8.4.1899. It was held in conjunction with the Baram Peace Making Ceremony at Fort Hose in which about 5,000 Kenyah, Kayan and Madong people who agreed to end their feuds and fighting against each other and, at the same time, to stay in peace and be royal to the Brooke Regime. The peace-making ended with the smoking of cigarettes for good fellowship and drinks of rice-wine



*1899 Marudi
Peace
Making.*

*Baram
Regatta on
24. 5. 1997.*



*Fort Hose,
Marudi.*



(Tuak). On 9.4.1899, the warriors returned to their respective longhouses. Hence, the Regatta or competitive paddle boat racing was held once in two years so that all the communities could mix together peacefully until today.

4) Fort Hose

Fort Hose was declared as a historical building on 16.4.1971 under Section 14 of the Antiquities Ordinance, now replaced by the Sarawak Cultural Heritage Ordinance, 1993. The Fort was first built in 1898 by Dr. Charles Hose as a measure to control Anti-Rajah Movement by the locals in 1898 and it was completed in 1901. It is situated atop a strategic hill overlooking the Baram River and there are two cannons at its frontage. The building was constructed of Belian wood and most of the Belian wood was donated by the inhabitants of the Baram and its tributaries.

Since its completion until 1994, the fort was used as the seat of administration for the various government departments including the District Office, Land and Survey Department, Information Department and Welfare Office. It was last used by KEMAS as its office.

On 24.8.1994, Fort Hose was razed by fire. In 1995, all the different communities of the Baram District contributed a Belian pole for the reconstruction of the historical

monument. The Fort was reconstructed according to its original dimensions. It was completed and declared open on 25.5.1997 by the Deputy Chief Minister of Sarawak, Y. B. Tan Sri Datuk Amar Alfred Jabu ak Numpang as the Baram Regional Museum in Marudi Town. This regional museum is now exhibiting the history of Baram, its economic richness, tourism potential and cultural diversity of the Baram people in general.

There are two other forts built in Ulu Baram. Lio Matu Fort was built in 1911 but it was further improved and completed on 31.10.1969. The other fort is Akah Fort which was first built in 1929 but was further renovated in 1996.

5) *Loagan Bunut National Park*

Tucked away on the upper reaches of Sungai Bunut in Baram District, is a huge lake, the largest natural inland lake in Sarawak. The local people call it Loagan Bunut and it is located within Lemiting Protected Forest. In 1991, an area of 10,736 hectares encompassing the 650 hectare lake was gazetted as a National Park as part of the on-going effort to preserve the unique habitats, rare and valuable plants and wildlife



*Shophouses
along
Kapitan
Lim Ching
Kiat Road,
Marudi
Town.*



*Marudi
Town
Square.*

indigenous to the region. The lake is dependent on the Sungai Bunut, Sungai Tinjar and Sungai Baram whose water levels are subject to seasonal fluctuations and this accounts for the fluctuating levels of the water in the lake. During dry spells the lake is converted to vast expanses of dry cracked mud. Especially in May and June, the water

*District
Office
Marudi.*



level in the lake is low. This is the time to witness and even to participate in the traditional "Selambau" method of fishing (the local version of a liftnet), developed and practised by the local Berawan. It is an exciting activity to harvest the migrating fish during periods of fluctuating water levels. It is also an experience to kick off the shoes and walk barefooted across the dry cracked mud of the dried-up lake. In April, 1999, the State Government agreed to spend RM12 million to develop the first BIMP-EAGA eco-tourism project in the park. The project includes the 5.875 kilometres of access road from Tinjar, information centre, hostel chalets and nature trails within the park. It is expected to be completed by April 2001. By then, visitors can drive from Miri to the Park in 2½ hours.

6) Claude Town/Marudi Town

As early as 1882, a group of Chinese Hokkien came from Kuching to settle down in Baram for trading. At first the locals did not like the Chinese but slowly they welcomed them. The locals sold jungle produce such as rattan and Jelutong. In return they bought clothings, salt and tobacco from the Chinese traders. In 1885, when the second White Rajah, Sir Charles Brooke visited Claude Town, there were already 45 Attap shophouses being built there. Around 1888, there were about 300 Chinese Hokkien and Teochew putting up shophouses in Claude Town. The Chinese Tuaepong Temple was constructed in 1890. In 1917, the temple was further improved. In March, 1889, there was a big fire which gutted all the shophouses in Claude Town. Within the same year, there were 40 wooden shophouses being rebuilt at the same site by the Chinese shopkeepers. In 1891, Baram wharf was constructed at Claude Town for easier loading and unloading.

In 1905, rubber planting was introduced to Baram area by a Malay leader, Dato Sharif Hamid from Simanggang (Sri Aman). As a result, a school in Claude Town known as SRK Dato Sharif Hamid was named after him.

On 22.9.1918, the whole Marudi Town was gutted by fire. 32 wooden shophouses were burned down and the cost of damages estimated was in the region of \$300,000/-. Within two years and with the assistance from the Brooke Government, 3 rows of the shophouses were erected for business. In 1920, about 60 Chinese Foochow from Sibü began to migrate to Marudi for farming and rubber tappings. In 1927, another group of Chinese Foochow came direct from China to Marudi. During the second World War from 1941-1945, Baram also suffered the invasion of Japanese force, but the damage was not as bad as the other towns in Sarawak.

On 8.4.1946, Marudi Town suffered the third big fire. The fire started from a shop where a travelling cinema's film was gutted by fire. The whole town was burned down to the ground. In 1950, concrete shophouses were constructed to replace the wooden shophouses which were gutted by the fire. The fourth big fire occurred on 17.7.1979 in which two rows of 22 shophouses in Marudi Town were burned down. After the fourth big fire, the face of Marudi Town was changing from the status of rural centre to a modern town in Baram. New concrete shophouses were built either to replace the burned shophouses or

to build more new modern shophouses in the extension area. A survey was conducted in October, 1998, it was discovered that Marudi Town has a total of 170 shophouses. The details are as follows:-

<i>Type of shophouses</i>	<i>No. of units</i>
i) Two-storey wooden shophouse	22
ii) Two-storey concrete shophouse	74
iii) Three-storey concrete shophouse	66
iv) Four-storey concrete shophouse	8

Total	170

Within the town, there are 4 medium-sized hotels and a number of smaller hostels/lodging houses to meet the requirement of the tourists and visitors. There are four banking agencies being established in the town. There is one cinema called Marudi Theatre but due to poor business, the cinema was closed down sometime in 1993 until today. A new Marudi Town Square costing RM1 million was completed on 7.7.1998. It has become a local focal point for family outings and other social activities.

Today, Marudi Town is not only the district headquarters of Baram District, it is also a trading centre and gateway to the world renowned Gunung Mulu National Park.



Tama Bulan Wang.



Temenggong Datuk Oyong Lawai Jau.



Datuk Joseph Balan Seling.

Marudi is now accessible by express boats from Kuala Baram which takes 2 to 2 1/2 hours and by air from Miri which takes only 20 minutes. Moreover, there are 4 other interior areas namely Long Lellang, Long Seridan, Long Bangsa and Mulu are accessible by air. Although Marudi is not accessible by road from Miri at the moment, there are more than 500 vehicles in the town and the furthest place by road is Lubok Nibong which is 30 kilometres from Marudi Town. The number of concrete shophouses, banking facilities and hotels have increased in order to meet the demands of the commercial and tourist needs. New government offices, Federal Complex, RM4 million Dewan Suarrah to project the culture of Orang Ulu and residential areas are also built. The new District Office Marudi was completed and

declared open on 17.7.1993 and the new Council Market costing RM2.3 million was opened to members of the public on 20.5.1995.

7) Baram Outstanding Leaders

The outstanding leaders from Baram District are:-

- i) Tama Bulan Wang, Kenyah leader in the early 19th Century
- ii) Temenggong Datuk Oyong Lawai Jau, the Paramount Chief of Orang Ulu in Baram in the 1960s. He passed away on 6.8.1974 at the age of 79. One road in Marudi Town and another road in Miri Town are named after him.
- iii) Datuk Joseph Balan Seling who was the Council Negri Member from Telang Usan was the State



Datuk Edward Jeli ak Belayang.



Datuk Luhut Wan.

Minister for Local Government from 9.9.1974 to 1984. He is now appointed as a Senator.

- iv) Datuk Edward Jeli ak Belayang who was the Council Negri Member from Marudi was the State Minister for Land Development until 19.3.1987. A road in Miri Town is named after him.
- v) Datuk Luhut Wan who was the Member of Parliament of Baram from 1969 until 1991. He was the Federal Deputy Minister of Agriculture from 1982 to 1987 and Federal Deputy

Minister of Works from 1987 to 1991. He passed away in Miri on 11.11.1999 at the age of 55.

8) Long Lama Sub-district

Long Lama is a sub-district of Baram District and based on 1991 Census, it has a population of 45,452. Long Lama is accessible both by road and by river. The Bazaar is 153 kilometres from Miri and 75 kilometres from Bakong through J.K.R. road, Plantation Road and Logging Road. The journey takes 4 hours by road from Miri and it takes nearly 6 hours by river from Miri through Marudi. In 1905, a row of 5 wooden shophouses was built at the opposite bank of the present Long Lama Bazaar. Due to soil erosion, the shopkeepers shifted the



Long Lama Bazaar.

shophouses to the existing Long Lama Bazaar in 1927. By then, the shophouses had increased to 9 units. In 1945, the Bazaar had increased to 16 shophouses. Today, there are 26 units of concrete double-storey shophouses with 4 hotels along Jalan Lee Kai Tai and Jalan Layang Layang. A Council Market in the Bazaar together with the essential government agencies are being established to serve the people in the area. There are some 40,000 hectares of oil palm plantations planted by Loagan Bunut Plantation, Bakong Oil Palm Plantation and Rambungan Hijau Oil Palm Plantations located along Bakong/Long Lama Road and Temala areas. These plantations have provided huge job opportunities and business not only to the locals but also to the nearby areas.

9) *Bakong Sub-district (Beluru Sub-district)*

Bakong is another sub-district of Baram District. Bakong Bazaar which is 78 kilometres from Miri is accessible by road from Miri. It takes about one and half hours to travel through part of Bintulu/Miri Road and Bakong Road to reach the Bazaar. In fact, the name "Bakong" was one of the indigenous races staying along a river

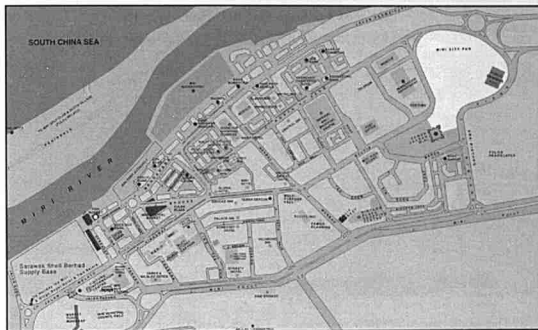


Bakong Bazaar.

called Bakong. In the early days, they initially settled along a small stream called Sungai Entubah. From there, they moved to a settlement called Entulang along the same stream. After many decades, they migrated over to Beluru Bazaar where they still stay until today. It was after they had settled permanently in Beluru that they were converted to Islam in the 1950s.

Bakong Bazaar was established in 1930 by a group of Chinese Hokkien. On 4.1.1972, a big fire gutted all the 12 wooden shophouses in the Bazaar. After 7 years, the existing Bakong Bazaar was rebuilt. Today, there are 16 units of double-storey concrete shophouses, 18 units of hawkker stalls belonging to Persatuan Peniaga Bumiputra Miri and one Council Market in Bakong Bazaar. Based on 1991 Census, there are 10,465 people staying in Bakong Sub-district.

Map of Miri Town



XV. MIRI TODAY

For the past twenty years, Miri town has developed at a faster pace than Sibul. In actual fact, Miri has overtaken Sibul as far as the size of the township is concerned and now it has become the largest town in Sarawak and it is still expanding its commercial and residential areas towards Lopeng, Lutong Road, Riam Road, Airport Road and Tanjung Lobang areas.

Today, Petronas, the national oil corporation and Shell Company are both responsible for discovering, producing and

refining oil in Sarawak. In 1985, Shell operated about 110 structures offshore Sarawak and Sabah with average daily production exceeding 200,000 barrels a day. The production was almost half of Malaysia's total oil production.

The RM13.7 million Miri Indoor Stadium is scheduled for completion in 1999. The stadium could be used for sports and games as well as holding international events such as conferences, exhibitions and seminars. It can accommodate a seating capacity of 4,000 people.

*Brighton
Condominium
along Brighton
Road, Miri.*



The world-class Miri City Fan Project which is considered as Miri Municipal Council's most prestigious project was completed in 1998. Covering an area of 10 hectares and costing RM16 million, Phase II of the project includes a 90 metre diameter amphitheatre with a seating capacity of 5,000 people and 15,000 standing audience as well as water fountains. The project will include a four themed gardens namely Islamic, botanical, formal and Chinese gardens. Phase III of the project will include a museum, a handicraft centre and a library. When fully completed, the RM36 million City Fan project will be a shining example of an imagination stretched to the limits to add function and beauty to Miri

Town. It will be the only one of its kind so far in having such a concept in Malaysia.

In view of the congestion in the town centre, the government is building offices away from the town. The construction and completion of six-storey Miri Inland Revenue Board (IRB) office costing RM14 million at BLD Garden along Miri-Pujut Road is a good example. Even Miri Port Authority (MPA) is building its new office at Kuala Baram which is 30 kilometres from Miri Town. This again will help to cease the traffic congestion in the town centre and at the same time to encourage more industries to be built at the 1,107 hectare industrial site near to the new Miri Port in Kuala

*Chinese
Garden at
City Fan
Square
Miri.*



*Judicial
Department,
Miri.*



Baram area. The RM278 million new port complex which commences its operation on 27.7.1998 is strategically located within the industrial park, deeper approach channels, purpose-built berths and support facilities for all types of cargo. Eventually, the concept of a one-stop service centre is to be introduced at Miri Port Authority at Kuala Baram.

Oil palm is mainly an estate crop which is grown along Miri/Bintulu Road. The large scale oil palm plantations are LKTS, Sarawak Oil Palm Sdn. Bhd., BHD Sdn. Bhd., Saremas, BLD, BINU and RH Plantation Sdn. Bhd. These companies have planted more than 220,260 hectares of oil palm up to 1997. The areas planted by the small holders among the longhouses and Kampung are 3,000 hectares up to 1997. There are 4 oil palm mills being established along Miri/Bintulu Road.

In recent years, the basic public amenities of Miri have been greatly improved. The road system especially along Miri Airport Road, Miri Lutong Road and the major town roads have been greatly improved to cease traffic congestion in the town. New General Hospital, Civic Centre costing RM7.6 million, multi-storey carpark and other government buildings are constructed one after another and are now in full operation. Today Miri Town has the largest number of luxurious and medium class hotels in Sarawak. It also has the biggest number of supermarkets for a town of its size. The Boulevard shopping complex is simply huge. Besides, multi-storey hotels, shopping complexes, shophouses and residential areas are being built and obviously all these buildings are changing Miri's skyline and enhance its

*Miri Town
towards
Canada
Hill.*



image as a resort city in future. The tallest building is the completion of Yu Lan Plaza soaring some 24-storey high. On 18.12.1985, Miri new airport terminal costing RM12 million began operation. On 4.7.1988 Miri new modern airport was completed to ease the heavy air communication in the northern region of Sarawak. The Brighton, the first luxury beach-side condominium is the latest addition to Miri's skyscrapers. With exclusivity in mind, Brighton promises an elegant and luxurious feeling in Miri Town. On 5.8.1999, the Prime Minister of Malaysia, YAB Dato' Seri Dr. Mahathir Muhamad officially launched the sprawling Perny Jaya New Township, Tudan, Miri. The new township will have 3,000 units of low and medium lowcost houses by December 2000. By the year 2020, some 17,000 premises will be set up in the Perny Jaya New Township

to cater the need of some 80,000 residents in the fast growing Miri Town.

XVI. FUTURE MIRI AS A RESORT CITY

Under the able and effective leadership of the Chief Minister of Sarawak, YAB Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr.) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud, the future of Miri to become a healthy Resort City will become a reality. By the year 2005, a new Miri will arise, born of the vision of a locally born great man who looked beyond the town's oil rigs and sand bars. The booming Miri Town is greatly honoured to be chosen as the venue for the second university being established in the State. On 4.3.1999, Curtin University Temporary Campus was established at Riam, Miri. On 14.10.1999, the Federal Minister for Education, Dato Sri Najib

*Miri Civic
Centre
costing
RM7.6
million was
declared
open on
20. 6. 1988.*



bin Tun Abdul Razak, laid the foundation stone for Curtin University Permanent Campus on the 1,000 acres of land provided by the State Government of Sarawak near Desa Senadin at Lutong. It is expected upon full completion of the campus by 2002, this Australian prestigious university could cater 10,000 students to pursue their university education at home and, moreover it would boost up the image of Miri as a Resort City by the year 2005.

A group of far-sighted and dedicated city planners and architects are claiming the land won from Sungai Miri and sea along the seafront. The proposed development of the RM300 million Miri Waterfront will be another great bonus towards healthy living to Mirians and visitors alike. A new town to be known as Marina Park will emerge from the 200 hectare business district. It will consolidate all commercial, residential, recreational and

cultural developments into one vibrant centre. In its overall plans, all land and sea traffic will be streamlined. The new seafront protected by landscaped sea walls will be dedicated to the public for recreational purposes. Among the enchanting features are the outdoor shopping cafes, pedestrian walks and malls, water fountains and a canal. The most popular attractions are a river walkway with stone bridges, scattered hotels, shops and entertainment outlets. Another attraction is a breakwater serving as a vantage and gathering point for fishing and relaxing.

Canda Hill or more popularly known as Canada Hill will be the setting for a low-density hilltop urban extension project. The hill will continue to be the Miri's landmark of historical significance. The historical hill will also be the gateway to the hinterland where a new township, known as Eastwood Valley will be

built on the Garden City concept on the site containing 1,400 hectares of flat land. Two 18-hole golf courses will be built nearby and the result is a recreational paradise for the local residents of Miri Resort City.

The construction of Batang Baram Bridge costing RM100 million will be completed in the year 2001/2002. The proposed bridge which is 1,026 metres long will be the first cable bridge in Sarawak. Upon completion, it makes yet another important milestone in the development in the northern region of Sarawak and it will act as a catalyst to spur the economic growth of Miri. Moreover, the Baram Bridge will improve the links between Brunei and Sarawak in trade and in terms of visitors.

With all the tremendous progress and

speedy development which are taking place in the Miri booming town, it is very difficult not to associate with the local hardworking leader in the person of Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Finance and Public Utilities, Y.B. Datuk Amar Dr. George Chan Hong Nam and his hardworking team. Miri's population at 208,700 in 1999 is expected to grow up to 300,000 by the year 2005. This is possible because the growing economic opportunities with increasing activities in the oil and timber industries as well as commercial and tourism sectors. For the past 10 years, this has proven to be magnetic, both for the Mirians and its huge hinterland along the Baram River and beyond. The vision of tomorrow conceived to build on this legacy of today's Miri will be realised if all sectors work for it and by the year 2005, a new ultra-modern resort city will become a reality and will be born in Sarawak.

LIMBANG DIVISION

Map of Limbang Division



Limbang - The Town of Buffaloes

1. INTRODUCTION

Limbang Division, the Fifth Division of Sarawak, has an area of 7,790 square kilometres and based on 1991 census, it had a population of 63,236. The majority communities are the Malays, Kedayans, Lun Bawangs (Muruts) Chinese and Bisayas. The minority communities include Tagals, Ibans, Bidayuh, Punans, Tabuns, Kelabits and Melanaus. However, based on the Mid-Year Population Estimate 1999, the population of Limbang Division had increased up to 78,400.

Lun Bawangs are mostly found in the highlands such as Ba'Kelalan, Long Semadoh and Trusan whereas Bisaya are mostly staying in Batu Danau. The Malay and Kedayan communities prefer to stay at Kuala Lawas, Sundar, Sungai Limbang and around the towns and urban areas. The Kedayans were the original inhabitants of Sungai Kedayan in Brunei but migrated over to Limbang. The Iban community is centred in Medamit area whereas the Chinese are staying in towns and bazaars. As regard to Tagal, a distinctive Sabahan people mostly staying in Ulu

Merapok and Long Tengoa whereas Punan group themselves in Long Napir and Sungai Adang areas. The diverse races have given rise to a harmonious mixture of different cultures and faiths, reflecting Sarawakians' cultural and religious tolerance.

This Division is situated in northern region sharing borders with Negara Brunei Darussalam, Sabah and Kalimantan Indonesia with close proximity to Federal Territory Labuan. Both Limbang and Lawas are accessible by air, land and rivers. Limbang is the home of the pioneers of hill logging in Sarawak. Numerous birds' nests caves can be found in Merapok and Upper Lawas.

Limbang Division has two districts and three sub-districts namely:-

<i>District</i>	<i>Sub-District</i>	<i>Population in 1991</i>
1) Limbang District	1) Nanga Medamit	33,845
2) Lawas District	1) Trusan	29,391
	2) Sundar	
	Total:	63,236

There are altogether 2 towns and 10 bazaars in the division:-

- 1) Limbang Town
- 2) Lawas Town
- 3) Nanga Medamit Bazaar
- 4) Danau Bazaar
- 5) Punang Bazaar
- 6) Trusan Bazaar
- 7) Awat-Awat Bazaar
- 8) Sundar Bazaar
- 9) Kuala Lawas Bazaar
- 10) Ba'kelalan Bazaar
- 11) Merapok Bazaar
- 12) Ukong Bazaar

II. ORIGIN OF THE NAME OF LIMBANG

In the olden days, Pangkalan Terap which was situated at the existing site of Police Station Limbang was the old name of Limbang Town. Slowly the name "Limbang" was used to refer both for the river and the village. However, there are three versions as to how Limbang was being called in those days.

(1) *Version One*

In the olden days, Bukit Mas which is situated behind the present Limbang Town was supposed to have some deposits of gold ore. That is why the mountain is called Bukit Mas (or Gold Mountain) until today. People in those days did go and pan the metal ores supposed to be the gold ores. As years gone by whoever went to pan

metal ores around Bukit Mas area simply said "Limbang", "Limbang" or "Melimbang" in Bahasa Melayu means "panning gold". Slowly, the place was known as "Limbang" until today.

Recently an enquiry was made to Encik Alexander Unyia, the Director of Geological Surveys Sarawak, who confirmed that there is no gold ore deposit around Bukit Mas area in Limbang. However, he believed that the substance which in the olden days people panned in the area might look like gold ores but actually it was pyrites. Pyrites is a kind of yellow mineral which contains copper, tin and iron. It is in fact a classic Fool's Gold.

(2) *Version Two*

In the olden days and even today, Limbang produces tonnes of rice not only for local consumption but also for export to the nearby areas. Hence, everyday people brought their rice and washed along the river bank. In the old Malay term, washing rice is also "Limbang".

A check at the Kamus Dewan (3rd Edition) of Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kuala Lumpur 1997 confirms that "Limbang" or "Melimbang" means panning gold or tin as well as washing rice.

(3) Version Three

Mr. Alastair Morrison, the Colonial District Officer of Lawas in 1950s commented Limbang River was a splendid stream. He wrote in the article "In Days Gone By" published in Sarawak Gazette No. 1484 of 2nd Quarter issue, July 1983 that the old Murut name for Limbang River is Fa Brunei but whether Brunei gave its name to the river or the river gave Brunei Sultanate its name is not clear. However, he said, "The very first Sultan of Brunei was said to be a Murut Chief who was converted to Islam". He was Awang Alak Betatar who changed his name to Sultan Muhammad.

III. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Limbang seemed to have been reached by Hinduism and Buddhism long before Islam was introduced to Borneo in the 15th Century. This was evidence with the discovery of a statue of the Hindu elephant-headed god, the Ganesa, while levelling the site for the construction of the Residency in Limbang in 1921. It was possible that the statue was part of the temple of Siva. At the same time, Batu Nisan or Tombstone was also found at the site of the Residency. Hence, this is an evidence of the spread of Islam to Limbang in the early years as well.



Limbang Town in 1950s.

The Sarawak Museum Archives showed that Limbang Division was originally part and parcel of the Malay Sultanate of Brunei as early as the 15th Century. It was also the core administrative centre of the Brunei Sultanate. Ancient tales also related that one Awang Jarambak, the brother of the warrior Awang Samaun founded a kingdom at Mount Berayong in Lawas. Another legend said that Awang Alak Betatar built a palace in Sundar, a settlement at Trusan River in Lawas. Before 1800, there was no human settlement activities in Limbang and Lawas. Perhaps only groups of Punan tribe moved from place to place looking for food. Sometimes, hunters from other tribes ventured into the forest to look for wild animals. It was only during the reign of Sultan Abdul Mumin of Brunei (1852-1885) that many Malays and other communities started to migrate to Limbang and Lawas areas for padi farming.

29-foot
Goddess of
Merry
Statue at
Limbang
Buddhist
Society,
Jalan
Pandaruan
Bukit Mas.



Limbang was part of Brunei before 17.3.1890 and, at that time, it was a small village ruled by Sultan Abdul Mumin. Limbang was famous for its fertile soil and its large export of padi and sago. Owing to its importance, several groups including Rajah Charles Brooke of Sarawak and the British North Borneo Company tried to take over Limbang.

In August, 1884 Pengiran Temenggong of Brunei sent his representatives to Limbang to collect revenue. However, due to unforeseen circumstances, the Limbang people resisted the payment of revenue and they even killed both the representatives. As a result of the killing incident, in September 1884, Sultan Abdul Mumin instructed

Pengiran Temenggong to attack Limbang in order to punish the guilty ones.

Until October 1884 the relationship of Brunei and Limbang was strained and this situation was exaggerated by Rajah Charles Brooke as an excuse to annex Limbang into Sarawak Territory. From 1884 to 1885, one Anti-Brunei Movement was staged by the people in Limbang Valley who preferred the Brooke's Rule rather than the Brunei's Regime. In December 1884, some traders from Sarawak were killed by a Murut at Trusan River. Rajah Charles Brooke used the killing as an excuse to seek indemnity from Brunei. Pengiran Temenggong refused and because of this, the Brooke Government compelled Brunei to lease Trusan District to Sarawak at \$4,500/- per annum. In the end, Rajah Charles Brooke succeeded in taking over Trusan on 3.1.1885. After that, Sultan Abdul Mumin passed away and Pengiran Temenggong was crowned as the Sultan with the title Sultan Hashim Tablud Alam.

On 17.9.1888 Brunei agreed to allow its foreign affairs to be administered by the British Government. On 17.3.1890 upon the request of the local people of Limbang that Limbang to be under the rule of Sarawak, Rajah Charles Brooke with an armed force hoisted the Sarawak Flag there. The Bisaya community played an important part in the history of Sarawak. It was a Bisaya who killed Pengiran Makhota during one of his concubine-collecting tours. It was also a Bisaya who hoisted the Sarawak Flag and secured for the White Rajah, Sir Charles Brooke the annexation of Limbang in 1890.

Although the British Government did not fully agree with the Brooke's action, they allowed him to take over Limbang provided that he paid a reasonable indemnity. Rajah Charles Brooke agreed to pay \$6,000 per year to the Brunei authority.

On 5.1.1905, the Lawas River area which was formerly leased to the British North Borneo Company by Brunei was annexed to Sarawak with the consent of the British Government. On 13.2.1912, the 5th Division or Limbang Division was formed. Hence, the present size of Sarawak became a reality with effect from 5.1.1905 until today.

IV. OUTBREAK OF TROPICAL DISEASES IN 1904-1905

Limbang Division was once ravaged by outbreaks of tropical diseases. In between 1904 and 1905, smallpox swept through the area, killing thousands of people, mostly Lun Bawang. It was estimated that two-thirds of Lun Bawang population in the region died from the epidemic disease. For many years, trained medical workers were not available and in 1913 the only modern medical service available was from a government dresser who visited Lawas once a month. Only in 1931 there was a medical dispensary built at Lawas and then in 1941 another built at Sundar. During the Japanese Era (1941-1945) medical services were virtually non-existent. Health care had steadily improved since Limbang was liberated from the Japanese on 18.6.1945, although in 1969 cases of smallpox were

reported. Today, however, the people of Limbang enjoy excellent health care. A general hospital was built in Limbang Town on 18.8.1961 and the clinics are centrally located in most towns and villages manned by junior hospital assistants and midwives. Maternal and child care programmes are easily available. However, due to the increase of population, a new Divisional Hospital was built along Jalan Pandaruan in 1980s to replace the one built in 1961.

V. ECONOMY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF LIMBANG

Economically, padi production was a major activity in the area even before the arrival of the White Rajah James Brooke. At the river plains, the rich alluvial soil is highly conducive to the growth of padi. Coupled with the traditional padi planting skill of the people in wet rice cultivation and in that of hill padi in the highland, Limbang has produced many bountiful harvests. Based on the report from Agriculture Department in Limbang, there were 1,430 hectares of wet padi land and 2,100 hectares of hill padi land in the division. In 1995/1996 harvesting season, Limbang Division had harvested 2,690 metric tonnes of wet padi and 1,520 metric tonnes of hill padi. The people grow more padi than they need and, hence, rice is exported to other parts of Sarawak and even to Brunei and Sabah for sale. Buffaloes are commonly used to prepare the padi fields and this animal also provides meat for the people in Limbang. Based on statistics supplied by Divisional Agriculture Office, Limbang, there were 10,015 buffaloes in Limbang Division in

1997, of which 6,038 were found in Limbang District whereas 3,977 were reared in Lawas District. Because there are numerous buffaloes in the division, Limbang is therefore commonly known as the "Land of the Buffaloes".

Rubber was introduced to the region before 1900 from Malaya. For many years, however, it was grown only on a small scale. In 1910 the plantation or estate system began to establish but it was during the period of the Korean War (1950-1953) that the price of rubber boomed and many people switched over to rubber as a cash crop.

Timber, however, remains the Division's most valuable product. As early as 1901 it had been a commercially visible proposition and small quantities near the coastal areas had been worked. The first large undertakings began after 1920 when the Vamco Timber Company began its operation and exported the timber logs overseas.

In recent years, to insulate the economy from dependence on only one or two products and the vagaries of the world market, the growing of other cash crops such as oil palm and cocoa have also been encouraged. There are also coconut plantations, cattle rearing and freshwater fish farms. In 1998, Uta Hoe Sdn. Bhd. with the co-operation of 5 longhouses at Merutup, Ulu Kubong had planted 5,000 hectares of oil palms in the area.



*Buffalo - the
Landmark of
Limbang.*

Limbang District Council was the first council ever set up by the British Colonial Government in 1948. It was also the first multi-racial district council in Sarawak upon the enactment of the Local Authority Ordinance in 1948. It was then known as "Limbang Mixed Local Authority" and its first Chairman was T.K. Mulok bin Lampong. On 13.10.1998, Limbang District Council celebrated its 50th anniversary and YAB Ketua Menteri Sarawak, Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr.) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud delivered his keynote address at the historic occasion in Limbang.

In the years since the formation of Malaysia, Limbang has seen rapid social development. This has been very obvious in the fields of education, medical and health services. Educational services were limited at first from the early 1900s to 1938 and the only formal education available were the primary schools started by the Chinese community.

Later on, Sekolah Rakyat was established in Lawas town. Since then, the development of education in Lawas has been steady and primary education is available to all populated areas. In 1963, Limbang Secondary School was established and in 1970s, Lawas Secondary School was built to admit secondary students. Today, there are 4 secondary schools in Limbang District and 3 secondary schools in Lawas District. On 17.4.1971 people in Limbang could receive radio broadcasting programmes when the RM2.5 million Limbang Broadcasting Station was in operation.

For a long time the only means of transport in Limbang was on foot or by river. Fortunately, it has been provided with four very useful rivers, namely the Limbang River and Pandaruan River which serve Limbang District whereas the Trusan River and Lawas River which serve Lawas District. The rivers are not only a medium for the local people to get around but have contributed significantly to the economic development of the region. Heavy and bulky products such as timber, rice and bales of rubber are exported from Limbang to the rest of the world. The government has recognised the importance of waterways in the Division and continually seeking to improve their conditions.

VI. CHINESE COMMUNITY IN LIMBANG

In 1887, Chinese Hokkien migrated from Kuching and settled down in Limbang. At first, they built Attap shophouses at Pangkalan Terap (the present site of Limbang Town) along Limbang River for general trading with the local people there.

Almost at the same time, they built an Attap Chinese Temple for them to worship and to seek spiritual protection in the new land. In 1890, a new Belian Chinese Temple was built at the side of the old Limbang Hospital along Kubong Road. In 1940s, Attap shophouses were slowly replaced by wooden shophouses.

In 1964, when Sarawak Government required the land of the Chinese Temple at Kubong Road for development purpose, the present site of the Chinese Temple was offered for exchange. In 1977, with the assistance of the then Deputy Chief Minister of Sarawak, Tan Sri Datuk Amar Sim Kheng Hong and Council Negri Member for Limbang Datuk Amar James Wong, a new traditional concrete Chinese Temple costing more than RM165,000/- was constructed. In August, 1978, it was completed and declared open on 10.9.1978.

Limbang Chinese Primary School was first established in a shophouse at No. 13, Limbang Bazaar in 1918. According to Mr. Lim Swee Seng, the Chairman of the Chinese School Management Committee Limbang, there were only 18 students and one teacher when the school was first opened. In 1938, a new school building consisting 2 classrooms was built on 2 acres of land near Bukit Mas. During the Japanese Occupation from 1941-1945, the school was used by the Japanese to teach Japanese language to the locals. From 1947 until 1987, the school building was enlarged and extended on 5 occasions due to the increase of students. Today, there are three blocks of concrete buildings built along Jalan Pandaruan with nearly a thousand students studying in this Chinese Primary School.

Due to the expansion of Limbang Town, more tradings around the area and more land was opened up for agricultural purposes, more and more Chinese especially the Chinese Hokkien, Hakka, Hainam, Teochew, Cantonese and Foochow were migrating from other parts of Sarawak to Limbang. On 1.6.1964, Limbang Town suffered a great loss. Nine Chinese shophouses in the town were gutted by fire and 11 people died due to the fire. Within a few years, the nine concrete shophouses were rebuilt by the Chinese shopkeepers.



*Nanga
Medamit
Bazaar*

VII. NANGA MEDAMIT SUB-DISTRICT

Nanga Medamit is the only sub-district in Limbang District and based on 1991 Census, it had a population of 6,856 of which the majority are the Ibans, followed by the Bisaya, Kelabit and Chinese. The Ibans, most of them migrated from Simanggang (Sri Aman) and Lubok Antu, were invited by Sir Charles Brooke to plant coffee in Pandaruan and Ulu Limbang areas. Though a sub-district, it covers two-third of Limbang District and it embraces the whole of Upper Limbang and Ukong. Nanga Medamit Bazaar has six wooden shophouses and it is situated on a small hill along Limbang River. The Bazaar is linked by a 42 kilometre road to Limbang Town, but the road which is half tar-sealed and half-gravel road can reach the opposite bank of Nanga Medamit Bazaar only.



*District
Office,
Nanga
Medamit.*

Nanga Medamit Bazaar which was established sometime in 1950s serves as the trading and administrative centre of Ulu Limbang. Although the Bazaar has six shophouses, only two shops are opened for business. The rest of the shops are closed down because the majority of the population are now staying along the road at the opposite bank where temporary hawker stalls are numerous.

*Limbang
Memorial
along
Jalan
Kubong.*



The Sub-district which was established in 1964 has the basic government facilities such as the District Office, Dispensary, Agriculture Department, Postal Service and Police Station. Besides, there are primary schools and a secondary government school established in 1978. However, the new District Office, new Agriculture Office and quite a number of government quarters have been built over the opposite bank of the Bazaar. Hence, it is a matter of time when will the last 2 shophouses be closed down and the new Nanga Medamit Bazaar is to be built across the Limbang River.

VIII. BRUNEI REBELLION

In 1962, Limbang had its share of the international limelight when Limbang or Brunei Uprising brought its political and strategic fame in Sarawak. On 8.12.1962, a revolt involving some 2,000 rebels broke out in Brunei, headed by A.M. Azahari and his People's Party who deadly against the formation of Malaysia. He found support in some areas in Limbang and his force managed to seize Limbang Town. In Limbang, the rebellion was headed by a Sarawakian Kedayan known as Salleh bin Kardin but he was killed by the British troop. Another rebellion leader was Haji Salleh bin Haji Sambas who was caught and imprisoned for quite sometime by Sarawak Government. Now he is the Penghulu of Kampung Pahlawan in Limbang. However, with little support from the local people and prompt action by the 5,000 British troops airlifted from Singapore, the British commandos recaptured Limbang Town and other areas from the Azahari's force on 12.12.1962. The Rebellion was a total failure.



*Police
Station,
Limbang.*

Azahari's men retreated towards the Indonesian border and those who were caught and sentenced to imprisonment in Limbang were released before Malaysia Day on 16.9.1963.

Although the rebellion was over, nine brave men from Sarawak Constabulary and Royal Marine who defended our country against A.M. Azahari's force were killed in the gallant performance of their duty. The list of names of the officers is appended below:-

Sarawak Constabulary

- 1) 652 CPL Kim Huat
- 2) 809 PC Bujang bin Mohamed
- 3) 1391 PC Insolli ak Chundang
- 4) 1374 PC Wan Jamluddin bin Tuanku Alek who were killed in action on 8.12.1962

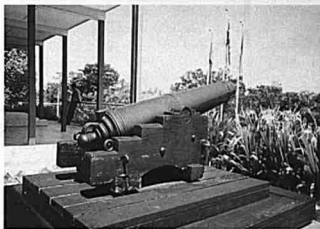
42 Commando Royal Marines

- 1) CH/X 4748 Sgt. W.G. Macfarlanf
- 2) RM 16883 Marine R.D. Formoy
- 3) RM 16941 Marine Gerald Kier
- 4) RM 19233 Marine Richard
- 5) RM 21017 Marine Powell who were killed in action on 12.12.1962

A monument in honour of all the nine heroes who died in the defence of our country against Brunei Rebellion was erected in front of the Police Station, Limbang along Jalan Kubong. The monument, which is known as the Limbang Memorial, was unveiled by the British Colonial Governor, Sir Alexander Waddell on 3.8.1963.



Limbang Regional Museum.



Old Cannon at the Limbang Regional Museum.

IX. LIMBANG REGIONAL MUSEUM

Limbang Regional Museum, the two-storey wooden building at Jalan Kubong along the bank of Limbang River, serves as a window into the history of Limbang Division. In actual fact, the present building is the replica of a fort built in 1897 during the reign of second White Rajah, Sir Charles Brooke. The original old fort

was built to guard the area against insurgent natives in the olden days. It was rebuilt in 1952 and in 1966, the old fort was renovated.

After the Second World War, the building was initially used as the Resident and District Office. Several other government departments also made use of this building before it was gutted by fire in 1989.

As it had already been declared as a historical monument in 1988, the building was rebuilt on the exact site, in accordance with the original architectural design in 1991. It was declared open as the Regional Museum for Limbang on 27.8.1994 by the then Minister of Social Development, Dato Haji Adenan Haji Satem.

The museum gives a grasp of the history of Limbang and how it was ceded to Rajah Charles Brooke by the Brunei Sultanate. A detailed account of its people and their respective cultures is also available. Handicraft, costumes and musical instruments of the respective ethnic groups are displayed on the upper floor of the building. Books written on the Bisaya, a predominant ethnic group here and the Lun Bawang are also displayed. Books written by State Assemblyman for Limbang, Datuk Amar James Wong Kim Min, are among the collected items in the museum. In 1996, it had a total of 4,555 visitors followed by 4,179 in 1997. The visitors were mostly students and tourists.



*Lawas Town
along Lawas
Riverbank.*

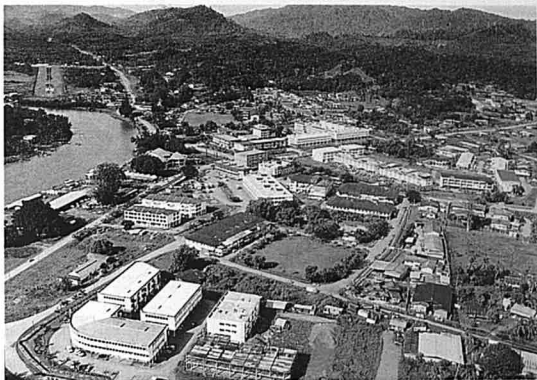


*Lawas Old
Town.*

X. LAWAS DISTRICT

1) Historical Background

Lawas Town is the administrative headquarters of Lawas District. Based on 1991 Census, it had a population of 29,391 with 7,000 residing in the town area. In 1999, according to the Mid-Year



*An aerial
view of
Lawas in
1993.*

Population Estimate, the population of Lawas District had increased up to 36,600. It has two sub-districts namely Sundar and Trusan. The area of Lawas District is 3,812 square kilometres. Lawas is a bustling frontier town with a predominately agrarian-based economy.

Originally, Lawas was part of Brunei but the Sultan of Brunei leased it to the British North Borneo Company. It was only on 5.1.1905, the Lawas River area was

annexed to Sarawak from British North Borneo Company with the consent from the British Government.

2) How did the name of Lawas derived.

Lawas, in Bahasa Malaysia means "Luas", is a spacious and wide area. In the olden days, people in the area grouped themselves together in the spacious area to settle down there and, hence, a township was born.

*Kuala
Lawas
shophouses.*



However, there is another legend. Long time ago, a group of merchants was attacked and chased after by the pirates at Kuala Lawas. They escaped and retreated to the present site of Lawas Town. At that time, the area was still thick jungle and they managed to hide themselves there. The pirates could not find them and they returned to the sea. The merchants felt relief, safe and secure. In local Malay dialect, it was called "Lawas" (relief, safe and secure) until today.

3) *Lawas Inhabitants*

The original inhabitants were the Lun Bawangs (Muruts) and some Bisayas staying in the downriver. The Lun Bawangs who are reserved hill people are now largely confined themselves to the upper reaches of the rivers.

Downriver to Kuala Lawas live mainly the Malays and Kedayans with a few Tagals originally from Sabah in the Merapok Valley. Ba'Kelalan and Long Semadoh are populated by Lun Bawangs who cultivate rice on an extensive scale. Generally, Chinese populace dominates the town and the bazaars as most of them are shopkeepers and traders. In 1905, there were about 100 Chinese Hokkien in Lawas. By 1941, the Chinese population increased to 800. From 1957-1960, more Chinese especially the Foochow from Sibul and Brunei migrated to Lawas.

4. *Agriculture Produce*

For the past few years, the Department of Agriculture had assisted the establishment of smoked fish industry at Kampung Punang, a cottage and handicraft making industry at Lun Bawang village called Kampung Tang Itong and Lun Bawang Beadwork industry at Kampung Long Tuma. The implementation of the cottage industries are aimed to raise the living standard of the rural people and to preserve the traditional artistic heritage of the Lun Bawang by incorporating modern functional features to the products. In 1991, swamp Buffaloes were bred at the Maragang Buffalo Station. In 1998 the station had 153 heads of buffaloes which had been redistributed within

the district. Since 1991, the station has bred almost 400 buffaloes in its 1,210 acres of land. Private companies have started oil palm plantations with an area of 13,000 hectares in Merapok and Sundar areas in Lawas District.

A total of 298 hectares of land in Lawas were planted with sweet corns in 1997. Ba'kelalan apple is also very famous. In the 1980s, the Department of Agriculture started its apple growing project in Ba'kelalan. The apple saplings were from Indonesia where the experiment of growing apples had been successful. Soon the local farmers began to plant apples in their orchards. In term of the harvest, the original plot currently produces about 10,000 apples per harvest, three times a year. However, according to Mr. Joseph Wei, the former Assistant Director of Agriculture Limbang Division, the cost per apple is in the region from RM2.00 to RM3.00. This is due to high cost of transportation from Ba'kelalan to Limbang. When compared with imported apple which is less than RM1.00 per apple, Ba'kelalan apple is very expensive. The introduction of cabbage planting in Long Semadoh which is 800 metres above the sea-level is also quite successful. Large quantity of cabbage is transported to Lawas, Limbang and Miri for sale.

The landmarks of Lawas are sweet corn and apple. Sweet corn is the most popular crop planted due to easy market in Lawas and Brunei.



*Landmark
of Lawas -
Sweet Corn*



*Landmark of
Lawas -
Apple*

5) (a) *Lawas Today*

Lawas is one of the two districts in Limbang Division and it is accessible from Miri and Limbang by twin-otter air flights. On 16.4.1995, the new Airport Building was completed and, hence, better air service could be provided in Lawas. The district is connected to Sabah by road through Merapok and to Negara Brunei through Temburong.

The 35 kilometre Lawas/Merapok/Sindumin Road costing RM13 million was opened to the public on 22.11.1981. It was the first border road between Sarawak and Sabah. At the border point between Merapok and Sindumin, Masjid Sahabat was built as a venue for goodwill and worship among the Malaysians of the two states of Malaysia. Private logging companies are extracting hill timber along Jalan Long Semadoh and Ba'kalalan where they construct and maintain the logging road both for their own logging trucks and other vehicles to travel along the areas.

(b) *Lawas Town*

Before Japanese occupation in 1941, Lawas Bazaar had more than 10 simple wooden shophouses built along Sungai Lawas. After Japanese



Shangyan Hotel, the highest building in Lawas.

surrendered and left Sarawak, concrete shophouses started to be built in 1946 replacing the old wooden shophouses in the Bazaar.

The present Lawas is a medium size cozy town and people are friendly. In the past few years, it has a lot of development such as new roads, a new airfield and a new township which is well incorporated into the old township. It can hardly tell where the old town ends and the new town begins. The local business is doing well with the cross-border traffic from Sabah and Brunei and the improved transportation infrastructure.

Based on a survey being carried out in October 1998, it was discovered that there were 268 shophouses in Lawas Town. The details are as follows:-

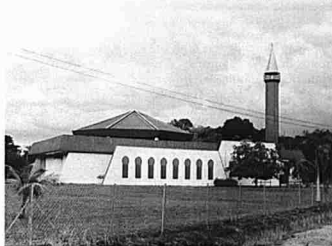
<i>Type of shophouses</i>	<i>No. of units</i>
i) Two-storey old wooden shophouses (2 rows)	18
ii) Three-storey concrete shophouses	236
iii) Four-storey concrete shophouses	7
iv) Five-storey concrete shophouses	4
v) Six-storey concrete shophouses	3
Total:	268

The new Lawas Council Market was built at the side of Lawas River and it was declared open by Ketua Menteri Sarawak, YAB Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr.) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud on 15.8.1996. At the moment, there are 6 banking agencies and 11 big and small hotels in Lawas Town. Besides, new Churches, District Office, District Council, Federal Complex and other government buildings are being

built within the town. A new school known as SRK Agama Lawas was established at Banting and it was opened on 23.8.1999. A sport complex costing RM8 million is under construction at the 15-hectare site at Banting and it will be completed in the year 2000. The new RM4 million Lawas Mosque will also be built in the town soon.

XI. TRUSAN SUB-DISTRICT

Trusan is a sub-district of Lawas and based on 1991 Census, it had a population of 3,958. In local Malay dialect, "Trusan" means canal or short cut. It was ceded by the Sultan of Brunei to Rajah Charles Brooke of Sarawak on 3.1.1885.



Masjid Sahabat, Merapok (Sarawak) / Sidumin (Sabah).

Old Trusan Bazaar with the old Kubu in the background.



Fort Florence was built in Trusan in 1887 for use by the White Rajah's officials. It was named after Mrs. Maxwell whose husband was acting as the Rajah Charles Brooke's deputy. The Fort had a big office space, a court room and a prison walled up with thick belian woods. At that time insurrection in Limbang against Brunei was still taking place. With the establishment of Fifth Division, Trusan was no longer as important as before and



District Office, Lawas.

*New
Trusan
Bazaar.*



*Merapok
Bazaar.*



during the Colonial rule it further became obsolete when Sundar, a rural town at the mouth of Trusan River, was made a sub-district. Fort Florence was dismantled and all building materials were taken over to Sundar and to build the District Sub-Office there.

A group of about five Chinese were believed to have travelled and settled down in Trusan sometime in 1887. They were petty traders and they sold essential goods needed at that time in motor launches. As time passed by, their business got better and then they built simple wooden houses to store their goods as well as to live in. The site was opposite Kuala Benganga. Their business gradually flourished and, hence, they needed much better and permanent shophouses. Then they moved over to Kuala Benganga.

A few years later, the situation in Trusan changed from better to worst with many punitive expeditions made by the White Rajah to Ulu Trusan after Trusan came under his rule. With the building of Fort Florence in Trusan about one kilometre away and the many dangers faced by the traders there, the Brooke Government then requested the town to be moved nearer to the Fort for security reason. 12 units of wooden shophouses were built on stilt in a single row. This was the founding of the present Trusan Bazaar.

*Sundar
Bazar.*



were not as friendly as they are today. Besides, creating a good and peaceful atmosphere between them, the Chinese were able to sell more of their goods and the Murut too were able to get better price for their products.

The present Trusan Sub-district was created on 2.1.1979 with its Administrative Office built on top of a hill overlooking the town and the Trusan River. It is next to the site of the dismantled Fort Florence. It is in a commanding position just as the Fort Florence before.

Trusan Bazaar is 21 kilometres by road from Lawas, one hour by river powered by a 20 H.P. outboard engine from Sundar and about 6 kilometres by foot track from the International Boundary with Temburong District of Brunei. The old Bazaar was completely destroyed by fire on 29.9.1982. The new bazaar consisting of 2 blocks of 15 units of double-storey concrete shophouses was constructed in

1998. Besides, new Agriculture Office, Government Dispensary and Council Office are built opposite to Trusan New Bazaar to serve the people in the sub-district.

XII. SUNDAR SUB-DISTRICT

Sundar is another sub-district of Lawas and based on 1991 Census, it had

*Awat-Awat
Fishing
Village.*



The early Chinese settlers who were mostly men took the nearby Murut women as their wives because this was not only for companion, but also for their safety. Trading in the remote areas in the olden days was dangerous as they might meet headhunters or create misunderstandings. The Chinese had no other relatives to turn to in time of trouble and, moreover, the Muruts at that time

a population of 4,471. Sundar Bazaar is 30 kilometres by land from Lawas and 9 kilometres from Sundar to reach the coastal Kampung Awat-Awat. The old Sundar Bazaar was gutted by fire in 1984. Today, three rows of 20 new double-storey concrete shophouses are built near to the old Sundar Bazaar. Along the road towards Sundar Bazaar, oil palms are being implemented by a private company, known as Trade Wind Sdn. Bhd. An oil palm factory is new under construction in order to process the oil produced from the plantation at the later stage. Awat-Awat is a location where four Kampung are grouped together at Kuala Awat-Awat. It is famous for smoked fish called Tahai. Most of the Tahai sold at Lawas and Limbang comes from Awat-Awat.

XIII. DATO PENGIRAN HAJI MATUSSIN BIN PENGIRAN HAJI ABU BAKAR

Dato Pengiran Haji Matussin was a distinguished Brunei aristocrat with hereditary



*Dato
Pengiran
Haji
Matussin.*

right to administer Lawas River Valley. He was the son of Pengiran Haji Abu Bakar who was empowered the authority by Sultan Abdul Mumin, the Ruler of Brunei from 1845 to 1885. However, in 1902, Pengiran Haji Abu Bakar leased the Lawas River to the Chartered Bank of North Borneo (Sabah) for \$6,000.00 per annum. Two years later in 1904 Pengiran Haji Matussin managed to convince his father to rent the area to Sir Charles Brooke, the second White Rajah of Sarawak for the same amount. As a result, the Lawas River Valley and Punang became officially part of Sarawak on 5.1.1905. However, Dato Pengiran Haji Matussin still kept a vast area of agricultural land containing 1,800 acres at Kuala Lawas for his descendents to farm until today. At the moment, the land is administered by Pengiran Ibrahim bin Pengiran



*Dato
Pengiran Haji
Matussin's
house at
Kampung
Dato, Kuala
Lawas.*

*Sultan Abdul
Mumin,
Brunei.*



Mumin, the fourth generation of Dato Pengiran Haji Matussin. Dato Pengiran Haji Matussin was nominated as a Member of the Council Negri in Sarawak and he served exceptionally well for the people in Lawas during World War II until his death on 10.5.1952. He was also a member of the Divisional Advisory Council in Limbang from 1949 onwards until 1952. The Dato was well-known as a very courteous old gentleman who liked to smoke enormous Brunei cigar. A road in Lawas Town is named after Dato Pengiran Haji Matussin.

Dato Pengiran Haji Matussin's house was built by a local carpenter named Marudin, who was paid 40 cents a day while his assistants received 25 cents per person per day. The posts of the house were made of concrete purchased from Lawas Town while the planks were hand-hewn by the Kedayans. The roof is of Belian shingles. The construction of the house took two years to complete. There was a 150-foot long jetty leading to two small halls by the river.

One of the halls was used by Dato Pengiran Haji Matussin as a venue for weddings and for hearing cases. While the other was a guest room for, among others, the Sultan of Brunei who occasionally visited Lawas at that time. The jetty and halls had been destroyed. The house possessed unique construction techniques as well as sculptures on the concrete posts and carvings on the cupboards in the guest room.

Dato Pengiran Haji Matussin's house at Kampung Dato, Kuala Lawas was rebuilt in 1952 and it had become a historical building since 1995. Today, the house is occupied by a great grandson of Pengiran Matussin, Pengiran Ibrahim bin Pengiran Mumin. The descendants of Dato Pengiran Haji Matussin are still collecting RM6,000/- annually being the hereditary right (Hak Tulin) for the leasing of Lawas area to the State Government of Sarawak. It seems that the period of leasing under the agreement prepared and signed in April 1905 is perpetuity because one of the conditions as stated in the Agreement written in Jawi is that the lease is lawfully in force as long as "there are still a moon and stars in the world!"

A field trip was organised by the author to visit Kampung Dato, Kuala Lawas on 22.9.1999. On arrival, he was met by Pengiran Ibrahim bin Pengiran Mumin, age 57 years old, the fourth generation of Dato Pengiran Haji Matussin. He is the Tua Kampung of Kampung Dato Menengah, Kuala Lawas. He confirmed that Dato Pengiran Haji Matussin passed away on 10.5.1952 (26 hb Syaaban 1372) at the age of about 90 years old. His

*Pengiran
Ibrahim bin
Pengiran
Mumin.*



properties were reported and registered at District Office, Lawas vide Probate Matter No. 23/53. Letter of Administration was issued to the descendants on 29.12.1954. One of the agreements in the Probate Matter was that the descendants of Dato Pengiran Haji Matussin had the right to share the building materials of the historical house. Hence, early 1960s when the two halls and the jetty were about to be washed away by river erosion along the bank of Kuala Lawas, the descendants dismantled the halls and took away the building materials to build their individual houses. Today only the main house is left as it is and it is being maintained by Pengiran Ibrahim bin Pengiran Mumin. As regard to the payment of hereditary right (Hak Tulin), T.K. Pengiran Ibrahim disclosed that he received RM7.38 only out of RM 6,000/- paid by the State Government of Sarawak in 1998. According to him, more and more descendants of Dato Pengiran Haji Matussin



*Graveyard of
Dato Pengiran
Haji Matussin
at Kuala
Lawas.*

are receiving thier shares in the hereditary right (Hak Tulin) and hence, the payment to per descendent is decreasing each year.

Kuala Lawas is accessible by a 15-kilometre road from Lawas Town for more than 10 years already. It has 13 wooden shophouses on stilts but only 3 shophouses are opened for business. Since the house of Dato Pengiran Haji Matussin has become a historical building with effect from 1995, it is a good idea to reconstruct the house with the original architectural design built in 1952. Upon completion, the house will become a tourist attraction as a historical monument in Lawas.

*The latest
landmark of
Limbang -
Purnama
Hotel.*



the implementation of the RM500 million Bandar Baru Limbang on the outskirts of the old town. Besides, the newly completed 10-storey 4-star Purnama Hotel which is adjacent to the Limbang Plaza is another imposing landmark in Limbang Town. At the moment, Limbang Plaza is accommodating 12 government agencies as well as a public library in its top 5-storey office complex. The commercial complex provides 194 individual shop units, housing departmental stores, supermarkets, bank, etc.

After the Japanese Occupation in 1945, there were only 5 blocks of 45 semi-concrete/wooden shophouses being built along Sungai Limbang. However, according to a survey carried out in December, 1998, it was discovered that there were 240 shophouses in Limbang Town.

XIV. LIMBANG TODAY

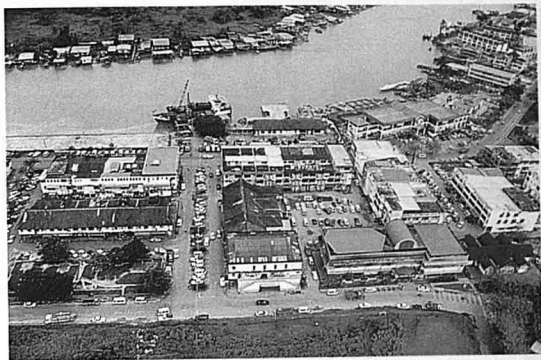
The population of Limbang District based on 1991 Census was 33,845. However, according to the Mid-Year Population Estimate 1999, the population of the district had increased up to 41,800. The district covers an area of 3,978 square kilometres.

Once dubbed the 'Forgotten Division', Limbang is set to become a major township in Sarawak in the near future. Among the most imposing and outstanding structure is the RM64 million 9-storey commercial cum office complex known as Limbang Plaza and

<i>Type of Houses</i>	<i>No. of units</i>
i) Two-storey semi-concrete shophouses	33
ii) Two-storey concrete shophouses	4
iii) Three-storey concrete shophouses	176
iv) Four-storey concrete shophouses	27
Total:	240

The expansion of Limbang Township is limited within the strip of land available in between Limbang River and Bukit Mas. Hence, shophouses are mostly built along Jalan Wong

*Aerial view of
Limbang
Town.*



Tsap Eng, Jalan Pandaruan and Jalan Buangsiol. Rex Cinema is the only theatre in the town. In order to solve the problem of car parking in the limited road areas in the town, a 7-storey Pelita car park complex is built at the side of Limbang Plaza. Besides, Limbang District Council has constructed Council Pasar Market and Market Tanu to cater the needs of small hawkers in their business. The development of Limbang Town is considered to be quite fast. Within a period of half a century, Limbang town expands more than 4 times of its original size. Moreover, housing estates and industrial areas are being built at the outskirts of Limbang Town.

There has been a great improvement in both land and water transport compared to the past when the people from the interior of Ba'Kelalan and Long Semadoh had to spend at least a week's walking from their Kampung to Lawas to sell their padi and jungle produce. There are timber-logging roads connecting the Kampung, even the most remote interiors of Limbang and Lawas. The journey between Lawas Town and Long Semadoh which is 105 kilometres in distance takes 2½ hours on four-wheel drive. From Long Semadoh it takes 2 hours to travel 58 kilometres on logging road to reach Ba'kelalan. In fact, it

*Limbang
Plaza*



*Pelita Multi-
storey Carpark
Building,
Limbang.*



is a great improvement compared to one week journey on foot from Ba'kelalan to Lawas Town before the construction of the logging road more than 10 years ago.

People now can travel by river and by sea at ease with the availability of express launches and speedboats servicing from Limbang to Lawas, Labuan and Brunei Darussalam. Travellers now can also use land transport from Limbang to Kuching via Brunei Darussalam by road and also from Limbang via Lawas to Kota Kinabalu in Sabah. Limbang Airfield was completed in 1963 and, hence, air service is also available by hopping on the MAS Rural Air Service twin-otter aircraft from Miri to Limbang, Lawas and Ba'kelalan. From Lawas to Ba'kelalan, there is a daily flight except on Thursday. However, the flight between Lawas and Long Semadoh was terminated in November, 1998 due to lack of passengers.

The present Limbang airfield which is 36 years old now, is too small for the fast developing Limbang Town. Flights are always delayed and even cancelled while travellers are often facing shortage of flights. A new airport, estimated at a cost of RM70 million will be built at Ranggau where the acquisition of 300 hectares of land costing

The RM 2.6 million Dewan Suarrah building was declared open by the Chief Minister of Sarawak on 11.7.1988.



Main Bazaar Limbang



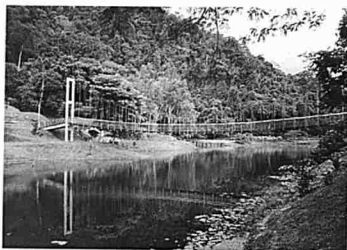
RM7 million has been paid. According to the State Environment and Public Health Minister, Y.B. Datuk Amar James Wong, the construction of the new Limbang airport will commence in 2000.

In recent years, the basic public amenities and facilities of Limbang have been greatly improved. The new Tamu Market, the RM2.6 million Dewan Suarrah, the RM2.8 million Outdoor Stadium, the RM2.8 million swimming pool and new government buildings are constructed one after another which are now fully operational. The construction of the indoor stadium costing RM7 million at Kampung Sebukang, off Mile 7 Roundabout was completed on 15.3.1999. The road systems in and around the town have also been greatly improved. With the completion of RM23 million Batu Danau Bridge on 30.8.1994, visitors can travel to and fro Limbang/Brunei Darussalam/Miri at very much shorter time and convenience. More banking facilities and more hotels are being built in Limbang as a sign of more tourists both foreign and local are going over to Limbang either on business or on holiday. At the

moment, there are 8 banking agencies and 15 big and small hotels in Limbang Town. The completion of Taman Tasik at Bukit Mas a few years ago provides an excellent recreational place for the local people and

tourists to exercise and relax in the natural environment. A sum of RM100,000/- has been allocated to construct the concrete steps, benches and shelters as well as a look-out location at the peak of Bukit Mas so that climbers can have a better facility for healthy exercise. The Limbang Waterfront Esplanade along Jalan Wong Tsap Eng is the centre for recreational purpose and for the holding exhibitions as well as a place for relaxation for the people in Limbang. There are only 240 shophouses in Limbang whereas there are 268 shophouses in Lawas. In spite of the fact that the size of township is smaller than Lawas Town, Limbang's business is much better than Lawas. Even the cost of shophouses in Limbang is more than double when compared to the similar type of shophouses in Lawas.

The flow of visitors from Brunei during the weekends is in sharp contrast to other towns in Sarawak during the economic slowdown. Brunei registered vehicles congest the Limbang roads and parking areas. Scores of licenced money changers along Main Bazaar reach their peak during the weekends. This is mainly



*Taman Tasik
Bukit Mas,
Limbang.*



*Limbang
Indoor
Stadium at
Mile 6
Roundabout.*

due to the fact that Limbang Town is closer to Bandar Seri Begawan whereas Lawas Town is further from Bandar Seri Begawan and it is only accessible by the Brunei people from Temburong area.



Y.B. Datuk Awang Tengah Ali Hassan.



Y.B. Datuk Amar James Wong Kim Min.



Datuk Haji Noor Tahir.

Limbang is famous not because of its colourful history or physical development. It is because it has the longest serving statesman and politician in the country in the person of Datuk Amar James Wong Kim Min who has outlived many of his peers and rival politicians. Datuk Amar James Wong was a councillor with Limbang District Council from 1953 to 1981 and he was a Member of Parliament in Limbang from 1970-1974. He was once the Deputy Chief Minister of Sarawak from 22.7.1963 to 16.6.1966. Now he is the Council Negri Member for Limbang and the State Minister of Environment and Public Health. He is one of the founders and President of Sarawak National Party (SNAP) in the State. Another outstanding leader from Limbang Division is Y.B. Datuk Awang Tengah bin Ali Hassan who is the Council Negri Member from Lawas since 1987. He is the State Assistant Minister in the Chief Minister's office and in the Ministry for Planning and Resource Management.

Datuk Haji Noor Tahir who was the elected Member of Council Negri of Lawas from 1979 to 1987 became the State Minister for Forestry and Special Function from 1983 and later the State Minister for Environment and Tourism until March 1987.

Limbang Town which had a population of 10,940 based on 1991 Census is obviously growing from a small rural town in the 20th century to a bigger, more beautiful and busy town towards the 21st century. Limbang can transform itself into a tourist paradise where its natural beauty, such as the scenic Bukit Mas and Semabak waterfall along Jalan Kubong, spectacular Buda Caves in Ulu Medamit, hot spring at Sungai Tengua, Ulu Trusan and wild life attractions in Ulu Limbang and Ulu Lawas can be marketed to high-yield tourists from all over the world. Eventually, it will become the important town and gateway in the northern region of Sarawak.

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GLOSSARY

Bahasa Malaysia

Aman
 Antu/Hantu
 Anugerah Sastera Negeri
 Api
 Astana
 Attap
 Badik
 Bandar
 Bangunan Yayasan Sarawak
 Bapa
 Barat
 Batu
 Baruk
 Bedil
 Belacan
 Binatang
 Buah
 Buaya
 Bukit
 Bumiputra
 Bunga
 Burung
 Cencaluk
 Cukai
 Datu Patinggi

 Dewan
 Dewan Rakyat

 Dewan Suarah
 Dewan Undangan Negeri
 Doa Selamat
 Encik

English

Peace
 Ghost
 State Literature Award
 Fire
 Palace
 Nipah Leaf
 Dagger
 Town
 Sarawak Foundation Building
 Father
 West
 Stone, rock
 Bidayuh Religious House
 Cannon
 Shrimp paste
 Animal
 Fruit
 Crocodile
 Hill
 Native
 Flower
 Bird
 Salted shrimp
 Tax
 High Ranking Title given
 to a Native Chief
 Hall
 Federal House of
 Representatives
 Civic Centre
 State Legislative Assembly
 Praying Service
 Mr.

Gong	<i>Musical Instrument</i>
Gunung	<i>Mountain</i>
Hadrah	<i>Malay Musical Instrument</i>
Hak Tulin	<i>Hereditary right</i>
Hari Kebangsaan	<i>National Day</i>
Hidup Selalu Berkhidmat	<i>Live to serve</i>
Hutan	<i>Forest/wild</i>
Hujan	<i>Rain</i>
Ikan Merah	<i>Red Fish</i>
Jalan	<i>Road</i>
Jambatan	<i>Bridge</i>
Jaya	<i>Succeed</i>
Kampung	<i>Village</i>
Kanan	<i>Right</i>
Kapitan (Cina)	<i>Chinese Headman</i>
Kem Belia	<i>Youth Camp</i>
Kepala	<i>Head</i>
Kereta Api	<i>Train</i>
Ketua Menteri	<i>Chief Minister</i>
Kiri	<i>Left</i>
Kongsi	<i>Company</i>
Kooperasi Serbaguna	<i>Multi-Purpose Co-operative</i>
Kris	<i>Malay knife (dagger)</i>
Kuala	<i>River Mouth</i>
Kubu	<i>Fort</i>
Lama	<i>Old</i>
Lawan Sendiri	<i>Fighting among themselves</i>
Limau	<i>Orange</i>
Lubok	<i>Pool</i>
Mahsuri	<i>Princess</i>
Makam	<i>Grave</i>
Mas (Emas)	<i>Gold</i>
Masjid	<i>Mosque</i>
Masyarakat	<i>Community</i>
Mata	<i>Eye</i>
Menteri	<i>Minister</i>
Merdeka	<i>Independence</i>
Minyak	<i>Oil</i>
Muara	<i>River Mouth</i>

Mutiara
Nanas
Negara
Negeri
Orang Kaya Pemanca
Padi
Pangkalan
Panglima
Panggung
Parang
Pasar
Pasar Minggu
Pembangunan
Pendam
Penghulu
Pengiran

Peniaga
Perpaduan
Persatuan
Pertanian
Puan
Pusa
Pusaka
Pusat
Puteh
Putra
Rahang

Rakyat
Raja (h)
Regatta
Rumah Panjang
Rumah Tinggi
Sahabat
Sakit Demam
Sakit Kaki
Sakit Perut
Salak

Pearl
Pineapple
Country
State
Title Given to a Native Chief
Rice
Landing Place
Warrior
Theatre
Long knife
Bazaar
Sunday Market
Development
Graveyard
Title given to a Native Chief
Title given to a Brunei
royal descendent
Businessman
Goodwill
Association
Agriculture
Lady
Local Malay Name for cat
Property
Centre
White
Prince
Jering fruit - a type of smelling
fruit in a hard black pods
People/public
King
Boat racing
Longhouse
Tall House
Friend
Fever
Leg pain
Stomachache
Thorny palm with edible fruits

Sama	<i>Same/together</i>
Saudara	<i>Brother/relative</i>
Sekolah Rendah Kerajaan	<i>Government Primary School</i>
Sekolah Menengah Kerajaan	<i>Government Secondary School</i>
Selamat Datang	<i>Welcome</i>
Semenanjung	<i>Peninsular</i>
Simpang	<i>Junction</i>
Sungai	<i>River</i>
Sultan	<i>Malay Ruler</i>
Taman	<i>Garden/Park</i>
Tanah	<i>Land/Earth</i>
Tanjung	<i>Corner/Cape</i>
Tasik	<i>Lake</i>
Telaga	<i>Well</i>
Teluk	<i>Bay</i>
Temenggong	<i>Title given to a Native Chief</i>
Tengah	<i>Middle/Centre</i>
Terendak	<i>Melanau headgear</i>
Tua Kampung	<i>Native Village Head</i>
Tuan Besar	<i>Big Lord</i>
Tuang	<i>Pour</i>
Hulu/Ulu	<i>Interior</i>
Tugu Pahlawan	<i>Heroes' Monument</i>
Tugu Dewan Undangan Negeri	<i>Council Negri Monument</i>
Ubi Kayu	<i>Tapioca</i>
Ulam	<i>Leaves, fruits etc which are eaten raw</i>
Utara	<i>North</i>
Ya	<i>Yes</i>
Yang Berhormat	<i>The Honourable</i>
Yang Amat Berhormat	<i>The Right Honourable</i>
Yang di-Pertua Negeri	<i>Head of State</i>
Yang di-Pertuan Agong	<i>Head of Nation/King</i>