

# Voices from the forest

NON-TIMBER FOREST PRODUCTS EXCHANGE PROGRAMME FOR SOUTH & SOUTHEAST ASIA

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## ANJAT

from Kampung Eheng, West Kutai  
wins the prestigious

## "INACRAFT Award 2010"

The Crafts Kalimantan Network's "Borneo Chic", a new brand of contemporary products with a combination of leather bags with other accessories that were developed from natural products and through the skillful work of artisans from East & West Kalimantan was launched at the INACRAFT Exhibition in Jakarta, Indonesia from April 21 to 25, 2010.

*(continued next page)*

# ANJAT from Kampung Eheng, West Kutai wins the prestigious "INACRAFT Award 2010"



Photo courtesy of Seting Beraan  
NTFP-EP Kalimantan staff, Seting Beraan and Dayak Benuaq artisan winner, Ibu Ani pose in front of the INACRAFT signboard

"I never imagined before that our **anjat**, which originated from the small village of **Dayak**, could become a bag with full of style!"

Considered to be Indonesia's largest exhibit, the Inacraft, with this year's theme of: "Inspiring People to Care about the Environment Friendly Handicrafts", was attended by hundreds of craftsmen and the best craft entrepreneurs from all over Indonesia. This annual event also served as an opportunity to bring visitors and buyers from various countries who came to seek new and high quality products.

From the very first day when it was launched, the "Borneo Chic" booth was immediately swamped by visitors and buyers, not only from Indonesia, but also from abroad, who were truly interested to see the collections of woven bags made from natural materials with stylish quality. From then on, orders from the Philippines, Japan, Singapore and even India started to flow as the products have been sold out during the exhibit.

Meanwhile, the biggest surprise came as no one ever thought that a relatively unknown handicraft product, known as the "Anjat" from Kedang Pahu in West Kutai Basin, would get "a thumbs up" from the exhibit's jury and be conferred with the INACRAFT AWARD 2010. The merit recognizes Anjat as the champion in two of the categories for natural fiber, besting

out hundreds of products from other exhibitors. This product was later on submitted for entry in the deliberations of UNESCO's Seal of Excellence Award for Handicraft.

Ibu Ani, one of Kampung Eheng weaver who participated in the exhibition seemed not to believe the anjat would garner this kind of attention and interest from exhibitors, visitors and the jury: "I never imagined before that our anjat, which originated the small village of Dayak, could become a bag with full of style!"

The rattan bags of the Benuaq Dayak of West Kutai in East Kalimantan are commonly known by the name "Anjat". They consist of beautiful and meaningful motifs, woven in a complicated manner, but still maintaining their strength and neatness -- a proof of the skilled expertise by the Benuaq Dayaks in weaving. The raw materials they use are rattan canes that come from tropical forests, which are in their catchment area that is considered to be vital for the preservation of habitat for wildlife and flora along the Mahakam River in East Kalimantan.

The "Craft Kalimantan Network," consists of Network NGOs and community groups who support city and weaver artisans in 11 villages of Dayak

in Kalimantan (or Indonesian Borneo). This network is an ongoing initiative to answer the challenge of saving the critical forest, preservation of culture and also the lives of the Dayak. Massive expansion of large-scale plantations, mining as well as forest logging have continued to threaten the existence of weaving tradition, which relies heavily on a healthy natural forest.

Meanwhile, the Borneo Chic brand attempts to bring the message for people to better understand the impacts of these threats on the Borneo island, which is known for its rain forests and indigenous communities. The three main reasons to launch this Borneo Chic has been to promote: (1) the identity and pride in indigenous culture; (2) sustainable forest management; and (2) the increased incomes for people living in and around forests. Apart from the modern anjat bag, the sanggau korit bag from Sintang, is also one of several indigenous heritage products that inspired the Borneo Chic collection.

Traditionally woven crafts, if taken seriously, will not only bring financial benefits for indigenous peoples, but also provide cultural pride and a desire to continue to preserve it. Previously, villagers weave "anjat" only to be sold to domestic tourists and seasonal tourists who come to visit their village. During that time, their marketing is still very limited and the income earned is also seasonal. With their active participation and cooperation in the "Crafts Kalimantan Network", it is expected that they can further expand markets and increase the sale value of their products. It is envisioned that if the market has been created, managed, and worked perfectly, then this will become a promise for the preservation of cultural crafts that exist in the community.

With their participation to the Inacraft, coupled with the recognition for the anjat has become the motivation for Ibu Ani to further develop this woven product from rattan and also to strengthen their crafts organization, Bina Usaha Rotan (or "Rattan Business Development") that started since the 2008. She further states that: "In this Bina Usaha Rotan, we work and undertake initiatives together, we try to share common experiences and more importantly, we want to improve the common welfare" {Seting Beraan}



The award winning Anjat Bag

# Exchange News

## Cambodian Wild Honey Launching Ceremony

SAHAKREAS CEDAC, in cooperation with NTFP-EP, their network partner-- Cambodia NTFP Working Group, community wild honey collector groups and local authority representatives, organized a ceremony launching Cambodian Wild Honey on 22 June 2010 at SAHAKREAS CEDAC's head office in Phnom Penh. The ceremony marked the official signing of the supply contracts between SAHAKREAS CEDAC and honey collector groups. Sahakreas CEDAC and NTFP-EP also signed a memorandum of understanding to cooperate and coordinate social marketing and quality management support to the honey collectors groups participating in this national wild honey initiative. A wild honey product display, honey tasting activities, film showing and presentations are also featured during the ceremony. On the same week, a Foundation General Assembly of the Cambodian Federation for Bee Conservation and Community-based Wild Honey Enterprises was also held to organize and formalize the cooperation of wild honey collector groups in 7 provinces in Cambodia including the honey collector supplier partners of SAHAKREAS CEDAC. This is significant for strengthening the supply capacity of the community honey collectors groups and the quality labeling of Cambodian Wild Honey {SAHAKREAS CEDAC press release}.

## DENR approves the National REDD-plus Strategy

The Philippine National REDD-plus Strategy (PNRPS), was approved by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Executive Committee on August 9, 2010. The PNRPS articulates the common vision and direction that the Philippines would want to pursue in relation to Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD)-plus development and implementation. This now becomes the official document endorsed

by the DENR for approval by the Climate Change Commission. As a continuing participatory, multi-stakeholder process, action planning and budgeting activities will also be held on the latter half of 2010 that aims to further identify, prioritize and earmark activities within the next five years that will focus on REDD+ readiness for the country. {Ester Batangan}

## JWHI fellows from Vietnam undergo internships in the Philippines and India

Two park staff from Vietnam visit Philippines and India to undergo internships on various approaches in forest co-management and community based biodiversity conservation, NTFP development as well as English language skills. Tran Van Tiep and Pham Van Xiem, were this year's recipients of the Joke Waller Hunter Initiative (JWHI) supported by BothENDS, a philanthropic program geared towards leadership development of partner NGOs by sponsoring them in internships, on-the-job training, action research and related learning experiences. Both Tiep and Xiem are working at the Nui Chua National Park in Vietnam and have served as local partners of NTFP-EP and the Center for Biodiversity and Development (CBD). {Vince Docta}



JWHI fellows: Xiem (left) and Tiep (right)

## Happy trails to Jenne de Beer!



On April 15, 2010, NTFP-EP threw a sendoff party for its outgoing Executive Director, Jenne de Beer, who has been at the helm of the EP network since its inception. The send-off party was filled with a night of food, singing, dancing and well wishers from EP/ TF/CMCC family as well as guests from other partner NGOs and institutions. Jenne's immediate family and friends based abroad sent in their video greetings and tribute to the man who has always been considered to be the 'father of NTFP development in South and Southeast Asia'. Jenne, who was recently awarded with his Darell Posey Field Fellowship Award 2009-2011, says that with him "stepping down", he has more time to pay focus on particular interests still related to NTFPs and indigenous communities. {Vince Docta}

# Editor's Notes

VOICES FROM THE FOREST issue 19 celebrates the victory of the Crafts Kalimantan Network in Indonesia, through its Borneo Chic collection, as the "Anjat" from Kedang Pahu, East Kalimantan wins the prestigious INACRAFT AWARD 2010! Our cover photo and banner article shares the triumphant story of the Borneo Chic and the anjat as well as the artisans behind this wonderful craft.

VOICES 19 is also packed with exciting stories and tidbits from around the region about crafts, honey, culture, new NTFPs and personal stories!

We also pay tribute to a great mentor and friend – Mr. Jenne de Beer, as he "steps down" as the Executive Director of NTFP-EP. This marks the first edition of the VOICES where Jenne is no longer involved as its over-all editor (but still gave wonderful inputs and generously contributed for "Oh My Goodness" for this issue). The production of VOICES has always been played very close to the chest by Jenne. His enthusiasm and passion to share and exchange information with partners and stakeholders is evidently revealed by each issue. Thank you, Jenne! We know that this is a tough act to follow, but we shall try our best!

At the end of each journey, there is always another start – with Jenne's "departure", EP is delighted to welcome our new Executive Director, Maria Cristina Guerrero and our new Deputy Director, Max Ventura! Crissy, as fondly called by everyone, has been with the network since its humble beginnings in 2004. On the other hand, Max has extensive experience in corporate social responsibility programs.

Let us wish that as EP embarks on a new journey with Crissy and Max at the helm, the EP network will further propel onto greater heights!

### The NTFP-EP Secretariat:

**Maria Cristina S. Guerrero**, Executive Director » **Max Ventura**, Deputy Director » **Tanya Conlu**, Asst. Programme Manager » **Vince Docta**, Resource Mobilisation Officer » **Sharon Padilla**, Finance Officer » **Arnie Ocampo**, Administrative Assistant Field Staff: **Madhu Ramnath**, Facilitator for India » **Joanna de Rozario**, Facilitator for Malaysia » **Dominic Langat**, Sarawak Community Development Organizer » **Panthom Priyandoko**, Kalimantan Facilitator » **Margaretha Seting Beraan**, Kalimantan Field Assistant » **Femy Pinto**, Facilitator for Cambodia » **Phy Bunthorn**, Enterprise Development Officer » **Uch Sophay**, Marketing Officer » **Phan Channa**, Admin Officer » **Arlynn Aquino**, Regional Enterprise Development Coordinator » **Ester Batangan**, REDD Project Coordinator, Philippines



# Highlighting ASEAN's Role for Social Forestry in Contributing to Food Security and in Addressing Climate Change: The ASFN Conference and 4th ASFN Annual Meeting 2010

## 14-18 June 2010, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

### COMMUNITY FORESTRY (HKM) IN YOGYAKARTA

The long time struggle that had commenced since 1995 through issuing license of HKm No.622/1995, the community was granted a 5-year license of HKM operation. In 2007, the HKm provided the permit to operate the community based forest management though a 35-year licensing scheme that covers 35 HKm farmer groups in Gunung Kidul with a total area of 1,087 hectares and 7 groups of HKm farmers in Kulon Progo covering 196 hectares.

The strategy of developing the community forestry is supported by parties and community groups that had contributed their roles in Working Group on Community Empowerment of the Forestry Management of Yogyakarta Special Province and Community Forestry Farmer Groups Association. Facilitation for community forestry development was provided by Forestry and Estates Service at the provincial level and the regency level by Technical Operation Units of the Ministry of Forestry and NGO partners, Shorea and Javlec. Some examples of the business units being developed by community forestry in the Gunung Kidul District of Yogyakarta are industrial units and handicrafts, cow farming and husbandry, alternative energy of biogas, marketing of farming products and forestry, as well as food processing business industries.

### SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY FOREST (HRL) IN GUNUNG KIDUL

Sustainable Community Forests (HRL) in Gunung Kidul District, Yogyakarta consists of a community forest that has potential and added value to be developed to tackle high rate of deforestation occurring in the state forest. Community Forests aim in meeting the wood industry demands in Java region, ensuring the quality and continuity of wood supply. The sustainable community forest management operates in 3 villages covering a vast area of around 815 hectares.

The certification scheme of Sustainable Community Forest Management (RBUMHRL) is an infrastructure to serve sustainable community forest management initiatives. In dealing with this issue, a joint consortium has been created to work together with the Gunung Kidul Regency Government to encourage the existing certified community forestry in each management unit of the three villages. Subsequently, the Consortium and Forestry Agency and Gunung Kidul Estate Agency are working on the expansion area of sustainable community forest management where activities such as institutional assistance and forest inventory are on-going. Meanwhile, in order to enhance sustainable community forest management in the

The cultural heritage of Yogyakarta provided the location to host a three-day ASEAN Social Forestry Network (ASFN) Conference, with the main theme: "Social Forestry in Contributing to Food Security and in Addressing Climate Change". The Conference featured an ASFN Knowledge Fair, where ASEAN Member States and Partner Organisations, as well as local/sub national/national line agencies of the Host Country participated and displayed their products and programs relevant to its main theme.

The ASFN Conference led the participants to a two-day indoor Plenary Presentations and Break-out Group discussions, followed with a one-day Field Dialogue to several social forestry sites in the outskirts of Yogyakarta to allow the participants with the exposure of Yogyakarta's Community Forestry (HKm), and its Sustainable Community Forest (HRL) in Gunung Kidul. This article aims to share some background information regarding the two types of community forests, with some photos from the Field Dialogue.



Dr. Yetti Rusli, Special Advisor to the Minister of Forestry on Environment, delivered key remarks during the Field Dialogue

Head of the Village delivering Welcome Remarks to all Participants,

# Donor Roll



**Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)**

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) is Switzerland's international cooperation agency. In meeting its goal of development cooperation to reduce poverty, SDC aims to foster economic self-reliance and state autonomy, to contribute to the improvement of production conditions, to help in finding solutions to environmental problems, and to provide better access to education and basic healthcare services. SDC operates within the Swiss Government's Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) and is primarily responsible for the overall coordination of development activities and cooperation, as well as for the humanitarian aid delivered by the Swiss Confederation.

SDC carries out its activities through direct operations, supports programmes of multilateral organizations, and helps to finance programmes run by Swiss and international organizations in four operational areas:

- Regional Cooperation steers SDC's bilateral cooperation with countries in the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and Latin America.
- Global Cooperation makes its contribution to tackling global challenges in climate change, food security, and migration and is primarily active in the multilateral domain.
- Humanitarian Aid aims at saving lives and alleviating suffering where direct relief is provided in the wake of natural disasters and in the context of armed conflicts.
- Swiss Cooperation with Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) supports democratic and market economy reforms in Southeast Europe and the former Soviet Union.

In the context of regional cooperation, SDC adds value to the regional work of NTFP-EP particularly on supporting initiatives aimed at providing space for the on-going discussions on Reducing Emissions from Forest Degradation and Deforestation (REDD).

In the Philippines, SDC has provided support to specific capacity building programs at the community level as well as policy work at the national level in the formulation of the Philippine

National REDD Policy Strategy. NTFP-EP is a partner of the ASEAN Social Forestry Network (ASFN) through pilot projects on REDD readiness in the Philippines. {Vince Docta} (source: <http://www.sdc.admin.ch/en/Home>)



Dr Juergen Blaser,  
Head, Forest-  
Environment Team,  
Intercooperation

Gunung Kidul District, a Working Group of Sustainable Community Forest in Gunung Kidul District (Pokja HRL) was established and based on Decree No. 95/kpts/2005, HRL members from technical agencies, NGO's and academia were formed.

The Field Dialogue was held with the representatives of the local communities and the local government line agencies on the Community Forestry (HKM) and Sustainable Community Forest (HRL) in the outskirts of Yogyakarta during the ASFN Conference. It provided participants with a rich learning and a fruitful experience of social forestry sites in Indonesia. In her closing remarks representing the ASEAN participants, Ms. Maria Cristina S. Guerrero, Executive Director of NTFP-EP remarked: "Congratulations on the community forests that are strongly supported by the community, where the activities are visible, and the traditional culture is strongly preserved."

The Conference itself was organised to collect findings and recommendations in: accelerating the successful implementation of social forestry programs and its sustainability; the immediate next steps in measuring and promoting social forestry contribution to food security through sustainable, efficient and effective use of forest by minimizing the risks and impacts of and the contributions to climate change; and, the immediate next steps in mitigating and adapting to climate change resulted from successful implementation of social forestry programs in the region.

This was not the first time where that ASEAN discussed social forestry. The ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) during their 31st Meeting on 10 November 2009 in Bandar Seri Begawan endorsed the "ASEAN Multi-Sectoral Framework on Climate Change: Agriculture and Forestry towards Food Security (AFCC-FS)". ASEAN Member States pledged to embrace food security as a matter of permanent and high priority policy with the view of the ASEAN's commitment to achieving the objectives of the World Food Summit and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Taking into account its practices in ASEAN Countries, the need for an ASEAN Cooperation on Social Forestry was discussed during the 6th ASOF Meeting in 2003. The establishment of ASFN was endorsed by the ASOF during its 8th Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in 2005. The main theme of the ASFN Conference 2010 was in response with the adopted AFCC by the AMAF, as a follow-up from ASFN as one of the ASEAN Sectoral Bodies in contributing to the ASEAN Multisectoral Framework endorsed by the ASEAN Ministers.

The ASFN Conference was held on 14-16 June 2010 in the auspices of the 4th ASFN Annual Meeting on 17-18 June 2010 in Yogyakarta, and was organised and hosted by the Ministry of Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia and the ASFN Secretariat with funding support from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Ministry of Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia and the Multistakeholder Forest Programme DFID Phase 2 (MFP2DFID). { Amelia Britaniari & Happy Tarumadevyanto }

Photos courtesy of  
ASFN Secretariat



Crissy Guerrero during Tree Planting  
by ASFN Conference Participants,

Photo courtesy of  
ASFN Secretariat

# Enhancing craftsmanship through mutual learning

In June, two weavers from Central Kalimantan -- Siti Aisyah and Kursiah -- eagerly traveled far from their village in Kapuas to come to the village in Eheng, Kedang Pahu, East Kalimantan. They braved the total travelling time of four hours by boat plus 21 hours of journey over land to be able to share knowledge and experiences with fellow crafts people engaged in rattan weaving in East Kalimantan. In addition to sharing their experiences, they would also want to learn quality control matting that has been done by craftspeople in Eheng. Their presence and good intentions, of course, were warmly greeted by artisans from the village.

Welcomed by fellow weavers, who came from another village, the weavers of Eheng came prepared by bringing their own crafts products. The Kedang Pahu weavers were ever ready to share information about how to maintain the quality of their woven rattan matting to produce a high quality product – neat looking, yet, strong and durable, that will last a long time. In the same way, our two weavers from the Kapuas eagerly shared their knowledge on how to color the crafts -- the "Kapuas style" -- and their way of making wicker baskets.

The weavers in the Bentian area were not left out to share stories about coloring and their meanings / stories behind every image that appeared on the grill. There are magical and religious values of each motif that have been produced, and this motif is maintained in order to perpetuate their beliefs. Matting for them is not only a hobby or a part of their daily routine, but clearly it is to preserve their culture and beliefs. It was interesting to see how they compared notes amongst themselves – seeing how the process of exchange of knowledge and experience unfolds.

Through these exchanges, they also learned that there are special techniques and materials used by weavers from different areas. The uniqueness of the methods of each weaver from the different regions has inspired both groups to retain and find more effective ways to improve the quality of their products.

In reality, the visit of Siti Aisyah and Kursiah was indeed quite short (only three days) and it takes about the same

Time, for them to travel home, but these new experiences, new techniques and new friends will surely last a long time. The mutual learning between skilled artisans in Borneo is hoped to stand the test of time. {Seting Beraan}

## Upholding the Laws of the (Ancestral) Land: Promoting the Philippine Indigenous Justice System

including their justice system.

IPs traditionally keep their peace and administer justice in their ancestral domains through the use of their own laws, traditions and customs. Traditionally, most tribes resolve disputes and address criminal activity by consensus, not by an adversarial system. Also, a great deal of IP groups uses the traditional means of resolving disputes through the use of peacemaking, elders and councils. They enact their own laws and find this more effective, just and expeditious. This also leads to lower crime and conflict instances in many tribes.

In the Philippine setting though, indigenous courts have not yet been formally recognized or institutionalized, although many indigenous peoples groups have effective and speedy means of resolving conflicts and has shown to reach prompt, long-term resolutions to disputes.

Indigenous groups like the Ikalahan and Kalinga in the northern Philippine and the Teduray in Mindanao have documented and are presently implementing their justice systems. These groups have been invited to share their experience in the hope that their experiences can provide inspiration and

guide in helping other indigenous groups document their own justice systems.

So far, representatives from the Supreme Court and Solicitor General's office have joined the events, providing input on the formal court systems. They have also acknowledged the need to recognize and interface indigenous justice systems with formal court systems. They also recognize that there are best practices developed over time that exist in indigenous systems which the country's lower courts can learn a lot from.

The challenge now is in trying to work for the recognition of these justice systems and find common grounds and convergence with the government on alternative dispute resolution. Also, that some tribes resist documentation since it is viewed as a violation of a sacred tradition remains a challenge.

A series of dialogues have been scheduled and NTFP-TF, with BIND, MEDNET and AI are hopeful that these initiatives will open windows for the Supreme Court and the indigenous systems to find common ground and convergence on alternative dispute resolution. {Abigail Aguilar}



The NTFP-Task Force, together with Broad Initiative for Negros Development (BIND), Mediators' Network (MEDNET) and Amnesty International-Philippines, has started organizing forum-dialogues on Indigenous Justice System. Since November 2009, two forum-dialogues have been conducted in the aim to provide venue for sharing about different indigenous justice systems in the Philippines. The Philippines has more than 100 ethno-linguistic groups and each has its own justice system – some documented, but most are undocumented and remains part of their oral tradition.

Indigenous peoples (IPs) in the Philippines have continued to face different challenges despite the passage of the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) in 1997, but these challenges have not held them back from striving for recognition of their cultures and laws,



# When you weave, you weave together.

Photos courtesy of Sze Ning Puah

The indigenous peoples (Orang Asal) of Malaysia rely on the forests to provide for their basic needs and are heavily dependent on the land and its resources for food security, subsistence economy, medicines, handicrafts and housing. They remain on the margins of Malaysia's economy development and are described as 'pockets of poverty' in the country.

Although the rights of the Orang Asal to their traditional forest lands are provided for, these rights have been diminished through the application of state policies that favour large scale commercial development of these areas.

"We sleep, but the loom of life never stops, and the pattern which was weaving when the sun went down is weaving when it comes up in the morning." - Henry Ward Beecher (1813 – 1887)

The indigenous communities, who are struggling for their customary rights to land & forest, also fight to keep their traditions, knowledge and culture alive. When the men are out in court battles and fighting for their rights to an extent, that they are considered to be as outlaws, while the women, are the ones that are affected most by these wars.

Without access to land & forest, the women are not able to secure livelihoods at their own homes for they have been pushed aside from being self-sufficient, now they are deprived of their food and materials supply and forced into the fringes of poverty.

Day by day, these communities wake up to fight for their freedom knowing that if they fail to do so, they will lose not just their land & forest, but their livelihoods and traditions as well. For a community that has been robbed of their land, they lose their ties to identity and this is a huge loss of the preservation of cultural integrity.

Despite various resolutions, conventions and instruments that has

been agreed upon to stop all forms of discrimination against indigenous peoples especially the women, its implications still lack the moral and political will because extensive discrimination against these sectors of society still continue to exist.

Indigenous women face triple discrimination. For being indigenous, for being poor and because she is a woman.

"Our life is composed greatly from dreams, from the unconscious, and they must be brought into connection with action. They must be woven together." - Anais Nin (1903 – 1977)

The Crafts & Women Empowerment initiative aims to strengthen indigenous women's roles as custodians of traditional knowledge, and use this as a tool in the struggle to claim native customary rights to land & forests.

Women's groups are formed to start organizing the community to be part of a larger crafts network through capacity building workshops, exposure visits, sharing sessions, fair trade & marketing as well as crafts development.

Though the income generation is only moderate enough to cover costs and a little bit of earnings to the artisans, the more important gain is the opportunity for the women to organize themselves and getting the chance to build their capacity through exposure visits and sharing sessions. This is where they tell their stories and share new skills, materials and patterns. This is also a chance for weavers and craft makers gather, to share knowledge and exchange gifts with each other.

Being part of a larger and sustainable crafts network provides the Women's Groups security in terms of market prices and open opportunities for them through crafts development and innovations. Besides strengthening their social and economic structures, the Women's Groups are also able to form



Sinompuru Women's Group, Kg. Tinangol, Kudat, Sabah

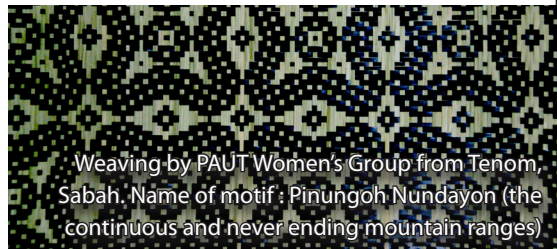


Alab Lanas Women's Group, Sook, Sabah

their own classes for knowledge transfer through the indigenous ways of learning. Traditional knowledge plays a big part in a communities' education to preserve cultural inheritance and intellectual property rights.

The Crafts & Women Empowerment initiative will not only provide a platform for women and craft makers, but it will also strengthen the network of the indigenous communities that share the same issues and grave concerns over land & forest matters. It is only when their rights are recognized as forest custodians and natives of their own customary lands, will the indigenous communities finally gain the justice and equality they have been fighting for.

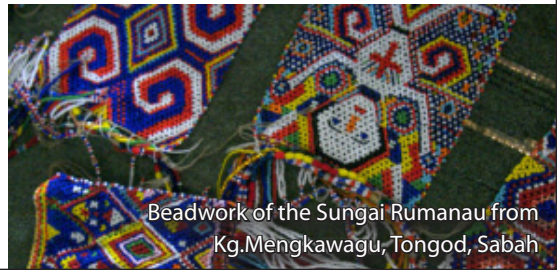
Besides weaving their arts and crafts, they have also started weaving a web of solidarity, sharing the same hopes and dreams to be able to live their lives free. So when weave, they weave together {Eleanor Goroh, JOAS}



Weaving by PAUT Women's Group from Tenom, Sabah. Name of motif : Pinungoh Nundayon (the continuous and never ending mountain ranges)



A common sight in Malaysia, where massive forest areas are logged and converted into oil palm plantations and other types of cash crops. Location : Tongod, Sabah.



Beadwork of the Sungai Rumanau from Kg. Mengkawagu, Tongod, Sabah

# Food from the forest

The following features the LUTLUT and MELMEL – both are sumptuous indigenous recipes of the Palaw'an tribe in Palawan, Philippines. Contributed by Norlita Colili, NTFP-TF Enterprise Development Officer

## LUTLUT

### sticky rice cooked in a bamboo

Lutlut is a traditional food prepared primarily for thanksgiving and as offering to God "Peglingew ki Empu" for the good season that we were able to plant our upland rice again in the uma (swidden fields) and so, whatever is left from the pungu (planting seeds) planting is no longer kept but instead cooked as lutlut. Another time of the year where lutlut is cooked is during the end of the harvest season, to thank God for the fruitful harvest and the bounty. Other occasions where lutlut is also prepared are during fulfillment of vows made for healing the sick and also other special occasions.

#### 1. Ingredients

- Meregket (malagkit-sticky rice)
- Gata (gata-coconut milk)

#### 2. Procedure

- Soak the sticky rice in water overnight
- Prepare the bamboo (sumbiling or kawayan species)
- Prepare the coconut milk and fill the bamboo with a desired amount the cocomilk, and
- Put the drained sticky rice into the bamboo (don't compress to allow space for the rice to cook well)
- Cook in moderate fire for atleast 1 hour to 2 hours (depending on the size of the bamboo used)
- Let it simmer and cool down
- Cut and crack the bamboo for serving
- Eat the lutlut as is (or with a dish)



## MELMEL

### fermented rice individually wrapped on leaves

Melmel is usually prepared along with lutlut. But it can just be eaten as is, while lutlut is usually eaten with linlutlut neng manuk or sera (chicken meat or fish is also cooked in a bamboo as a dish)

#### 1. Ingredients

- Ordinary rice
- Purad (indigenous yeast)

#### 2. Procedure

- Cook the rice
- Pound to powder the yeast (this is usually stored like cookies but hang dried for several days even a year-shelf life)
- Set the rice in a winnow and let it cool
- When cooled down, sprinkle the yeast into the rice and mixed thoroughly to evenly spread out the yeast with a wooden laddle
- Using the laddle, measure a desired amount of the mixed rice into binwa or girangan leaves (species of forest trees) and wrapped individually, double the leaves if needed
- Store the wrapped mixture into a tabig (traditional basket like a tingkep but bigger and without the cover) lined with several layers of binwa/girangan leaves also. When the basket is filled up, cover the top with leaves and make sure that no amount of air can enter the basket. Finally, cover it with blanket to enable good fermentation.
- Ferment overnight or at least for 18 hours
- Serve as dessert or as replacement to wine to aid better digestion (A word of advice, though: do not eat too much or else you will get drunk!)



Photos courtesy of Sze Ning Puah

## Lessons from my field visit to

# Sabah, Malaysia

I arrived at Kota Kinabalu evening of the 24th of June 2010, quite nervous after spending 30 minutes waiting for the person to fetch me at the airport. While sitting alone on a bench at the arrival area, one Filipina, a utility worker at the airport, approached and interviewed me and she offered to bring me to the third floor of the building to meet other Filipina workers. In our local T'boli beliefs, meeting and making new friends by accident along your way prior to your final destination, is a sign of good luck as well as the good possibility of accomplishing the mission and the goals that this travel has intended. So I bade goodbye to my fellow Filipinas as soon as Ely came after exchanging sisterly hugs with them.

The following morning, we embarked on a 10 hour trip to Kg

JOAS, Elevyn, PACOS and NTFP-EP. My participation was simply to share our experiences, hoping to spark the same inspiration to IP communities in Sabah. However, I was thinking that the presentation I've prepared was not suited for the context as I realized that main problem of IPs in Sabah is more on the political side and not just about crafts. I talked to Joanna and Sze Ning to inform them that I will slightly adjust from what I had prepared to fit the interest and issues that confront the village. Next day, when the informal meetings and discussions began, I noticed that typically, men in the village were so participative and women are quietly listening to our discussions.

We then proceeded to the second village ( Kg Alab, Sook ) travelling again through the logging roads of Sabah. My heart was trembling upon seeing how

Mengkawago, Tongod. The trip and succeeding activities were organized by

the oil palm & rubber plantations have destroyed God's wondrous gifts to Sabah. This situation answered all of my questions why Crissy, NTFP-EP's Executive Director, is opposing these so-called "plantations". Seeing these plantations, we were somehow reminded of the recent popular movie-- Avatar.

Far from a distance, we could see a river with muddy waters caused by siltation from the rubber plantation. The scene gave me a full understanding of Sabah IP's political problem. It has given me also an idea on how to fully inspire and somehow equip the crafts groups in relation to forest conservation.

After a good night's rest, we held informal meetings in the village. The tribal chieftain introduced each of the men in the village but I observed that he introduced the women collectively as a group. However, Sze Ning and Ely insisted that he also must introduce each of the women

(continued on page 12)



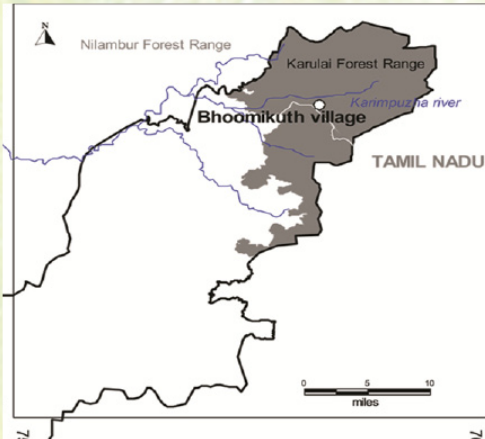
February, the beginning of hot summer in Kerala.

Streams and ponds show signs of drying up already...

The trees of the moist deciduous forest are prudent; they shed their leaves to prevent the loss of water through transpiration. Each drop is priceless in nature.

# A FOREST TRAIL OF JANGLI ALMOND (*Hydnocarpus pentandra*)

## Nilambur Valley



The strong heat of the sun does not stop some trees from bearing new buds with magnificent colors. Some bloom with nectar to entice others to come and carry their pollen. And some bear fruit, waiting to expand their kingdoms, making way for new life.

Only a few adivasi hamlets remain inside the forest of Kerala. Those inside or close to the reserve forests are more secure than those who live outside in 'colonies' as their hamlets are called by society at large. They have been alienated from their traditional lifestyle of gathering forest produce and are more dependants on coolie work. Those near the forest have the option to collect NTFPs in different seasons.

Around 150 plant products are permitted for collection by the Kerala Forest Department. These NTFPs are then sold through the Co-operative Societies which were set up in the 1970's. Local traders are also buying the NTFPs.

In the Forest divisions of Nilambur, the teak plantations enjoy a lot of care and protection. These offer work and wages to the people including the people of Bhoomikuth Village, which belongs to the Paniya community. Like many of the forest produce, seeds of *Hydnocarpus pentandra* (Jangali almond) are a prominent NTFP that they harvest. Collected in the months of February to April and fetching them a daily income of Rs. 600-700. "Much of the *Hydnocarpus* trees have been removed in the plantation area and only the ones along the banks of Karimpuzha river in Nilambur valley remain now," explains

Chathan, one of the villagers that collect Jangali almond.

The *Hydnocarpus pentandra* is a medium sized evergreen tree found along the banks of rivers and streams in the plains and endemic to Western Ghats. It is commonly known as neerutti. The seed is 2 cm long with longitudinal grooves and a knot at the end. The seeds of the tree yield an oil called Chalmoogra, which is widely used in the ayurveda and siddha medicines.

The seeds of the fruit of this neerutti tree contain strongly antibacterial chemicals, two of which, hydnocarpic and chaulmoogric acids, destroy the bacterium *Mycobacterium leprae*. Ancient Hindu and Chinese documents described an oil that was effective against leprosy, and it is likely that this came from the neerutti tree. Only about the middle of the last century was the oil taken seriously by western physicians. It was investigated, tested, and soon imported from China but the supply was severely limited. In some places today, the ingredients of neerutti oil, modified by chemists, are still used to cure early cases of leprosy. It is also used as a fish poison. A paste made of the seeds is used as an external application to treat wounds and ulcers.

The tree always keeps some green leaves for fellow beings like the rusty colored endemic butterfly Tamil yeoman (*Cirrochroa thais*), the larvae feed on the tender leaves of this tree.

Chathan searches for a tree with matured fruits. He carries with him knives, sacks, water, betel leaves and tobacco. "When the brown outer shell of the fruit has many folds it means the fruit is ripe", explains Chathan. But he has to be sure so he takes a few seeds and crushes them. The thin black color and the feel of the oil assure him that the oil content is high.

A group of neerutti collectors usually comprise 3-5 people. The men climb the tree and pull at the fruit with the help of a knife tied to the end of a bamboo pole. Women move ahead to find the next tree. After the men have finished pulling down the fruits the women collect them and bring them to an open place where they break the shell and take the seed out and keep them on a clean plastic

sheet or in a sack.

Every day 20 to 25 kg of fresh seeds are collected per person. With in two months neerutti collectors get around 45 days and the harvesting areas are 0.5 km to 3 km away from the village. In the harvest the villagers follow tenure by tradition; all the villagers start harvest of neerutti in the month of February or only when the seeds are ripe.

In the evening they return to their homes and the women spread the seed in the court yard which has been prepared with cow dung and water. This way they are ready to leave for the forests early the next day. The children take care to turn the seeds for better drying.

The seeds need to be dried for 2 days in bright sunlight. Ten kilograms of fresh seed become 5-6 kgs. The dried seeds are sold in the market for Rs.25 per kg. "The dried seeds are taken to the oil extraction companies through middle men, The small traders are important for the Adivasis who need an assured market and a buyer who will pay them on the same day", says Chathan.

Even though the people are following a tenure in harvest, the need for *Hydnocarpus* seeds are increasing year after year from the growing medical industries. It is necessary to screen the chemical properties of other *Hydnocarpus* sp. (*Hydnocarpus macrocarpa*) found in the region. Vana Samrakshna Samithies should take initiatives under Participatory Forest Management to protect the habitat and regeneration of this medium sized evergreen tree. {Saneesh. C.S & L. Rasingam}



# EMPOWERMENT AND FOOD SECURITY OF KOLAM A PTG THROUGH STORAGE AND PROCESSING OF *mahua flowers*

## BACKGROUND

People of Mahadapur village made history in the late summer of 2008. Tulshi Mata Bachat Gat, a Self Help Group lead by Ms Sindhutai Devidas Adhey along with other members of the group now possess MF-1 license that was issued by the prohibition wing of state excise department. This is the first time in the history that a women self-help-group was given such a license, earlier traders enjoyed the monopoly to deal in Mahua flowers. Since then these women have learned to prepare 10 non alcoholic food products from Mahua flowers leading to food security and enhanced income for their family.

## Introduction

Mahadapur is a small village located at a distance of 15 km from its taluka headquarters Zari. Zari is smallest taluka headquarter in India as it had a total population of just 417 when it was formed in 1991. In Yavatmal district of Maharashtra Zari taluka is treated as a place of punishment posting amongst government officials as it is situated in a remote forested area with very little utility and infrastructural facilities. Situated in the central Indian forest-tribal belt this region is home to some of the poorest tribal communities in India. Gond, Kolam, Pardhan resides in this region, amongst these Kolam belong to the particularly vulnerable tribes of India. The forests here are classified as central Indian tropical dry deciduous forest with teak as dominant species. Planning Commission Govt. of India identified Kolam as primitive tribe as they were numerically few (34,458 in 1971), since then their population is stagnant and in some pockets its declining, their major source of livelihood is derived from hunting and food gathering from neighboring forests.

## MAHUA

Mahua flowers is an inseparable part of tribal life in central India. Tribals

need Mahua flowers for their religious rituals, as food, for liquor and for their spiritual requirements. In the state of Maharashtra Mahua flowers are under strict Government regulations as tribals use these flowers to distill liquor which they cannot tax and generate revenue for the state exchequer. People are allowed to keep only 25 kgs of Mahua flowers after May 31st before which all are expected to sell their collection to the Tribal Development Corporation (TDC) formed by the state government. Few traders have license to procure Mahua flowers from TDC and later on sell it as cattle feed to the neighboring farmers and tribals. These traders procure Mahua flowers at 5 Rs a Kg from tribals and sell it at a rate of 20 to 25 Rs after monsoon is over, thereby earning many fold. Tribals are left with no choice but to purchase the Mahua flowers from the traders at a higher price.

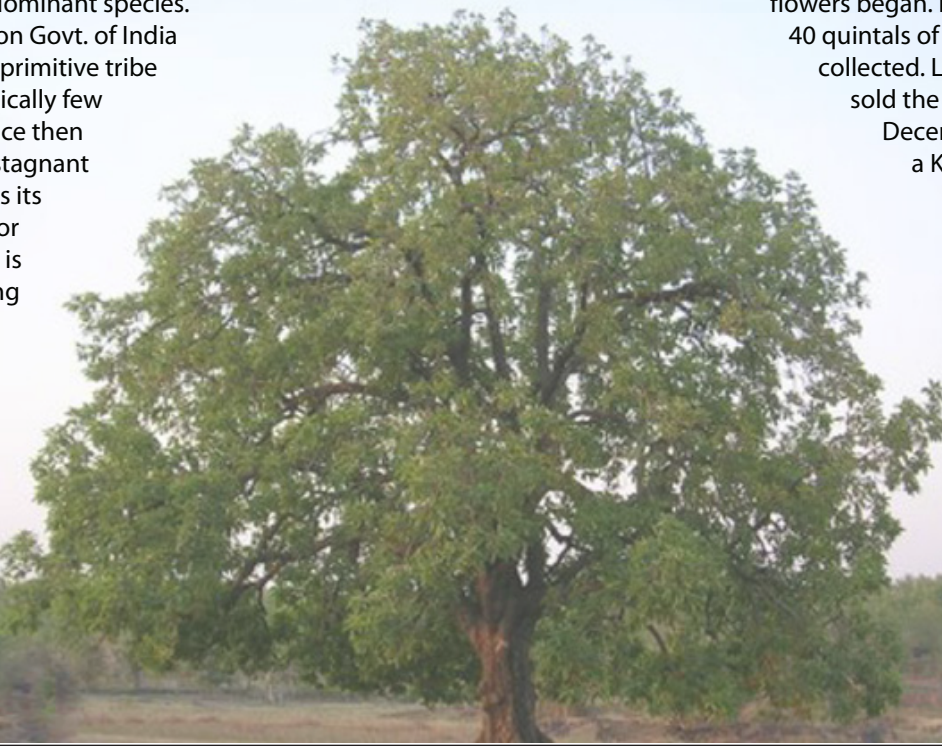
## SRUJAN'S INITIATIVE

SRUJAN a voluntary organization based in Mangurda about 35 Km from Mahadapur village through its village based volunteer Mr. Ranjit Dattuji Todsam who is a resident of this village helped the villagers to initiate a process for formation of Mahua Bank. Mr. Ranjit was closely associated with Dr. Madhav Gadgil an eminent ecologist of world repute. Dr Gadgil guided Ranjit to document Peoples Biodiversity Register

(PBR) of Mahadapur village thereby assessing biodiversity elements in their village. He also underwent trainings on Provisions of Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act and Biological Diversity Act (BDA) organized by SRUJAN.

Equipped with knowledge of important legislations like PESA and BDA Ranjit organized members of his community to form a Mahua Bank. This concept emerged with a desire to gain control over their natural resources and accrue tangible gains for their families. They knew Mahua flowers would fetch them at least thrice the procurement price if they could successfully store it for three months when festival season begins and there is a great demand for these flowers. Villagers particularly women as they are the primary collectors of Mahua flowers organized themselves into a self help group named Tulshi Mata Bachat Gat and requested SRUJAN to financially help them in procuring Mahua flowers. After much deliberation, it was agreed that SRUJAN would contribute 50% of the monetary requirement whereas the remaining amount was raised as contribution of SHG members. People were explained the legal nitty-gritty's of the legislation and the provision of ownership over NTFPs as provided by PESA Act. Necessary resolutions were sought from the gram panchayat and in May 2007, the procurement of Mahua flowers began. In the first season, 40 quintals of Mahua flowers was collected. Later on, the villagers sold the stock in the month of December. It fetched 17 Rs a Kg thereby multiplying their investment by three times in a span of 4 months.

A small experiment done in 2007 gave the much-needed confidence to deal in Mahua flowers. In 2008 a systematic effort was taken to involve forest department and excise department personnel from the beginning.



SHG members forwarded the copy of the resolution to forest department and state excise department officials; they were informed about the process from day one. Once the procurement was over the officials were informed and an application was moved at the state excise departments office at Yavatmal to grant a license to the SHG to deal in Mahua flowers. Series of process that included panchanama (investigation) by forest department, three offices of state excise department. Village heads and SHG in particularly could withstand all these pressures in a determined way. Finally, the patience and efforts resulted in issuance of license by the Collector of Yavatmal district to this group.

Now armed with license to deal in Mahua flowers the women folk were determined to trade in Mahua flowers, they also thought of preparation of non-alcoholic food products apart from distilling liquor needed for self consumption and for religious

purposes. Here SRUJAN provided the much needed guidance to link up this group with Laxmi Narayan Institute of Technology situated in Nagpur. Dr Bhootmange head of the department food technology was kind to impart training to three women and two men from Mahadapur village in preparing non-alcoholic food product from Mahua flowers. A five day training was held in the laboratory of LIT Nagpur where participants were taught to prepare Squash, Jam, Jelly, Syrup, Spread, two type of pickles, Mahua Chikki, and Mahua Manuka.

The expertise gained by this group was made known to the Project Office of the Intenerated Tribal Development Project (ITDP), Pandharkawada. ITDP extended a loan of fifty thousand rupees to procure necessary equipment to this group. This group since then has prepared these products and sold in nearby places and cities like Nagpur, Amravati and Yavatmal. Until date,

they have made transactions of 4.5 lacks and earned a reasonable profit of 55 thousand rupees. The group further plans to increase its turnover to above ten lack rupees and increase the profit margins by effective marketing. Moreover they now have sufficient of Mahua flowers round the year ensuring food and nutrition security to some extent.

#### RECOGNITIONS

Recognizing the efforts of this group Dr Madhav Gadgil recommended Mr. Ranjit Todsams' name for a fellowship of National Virtual Academy. Mr Ranjit Todsam since then is a fellow of National Virtual Academy and works as field supervisor with SRUJAN. These efforts were also recognized by NTFP-EP India who had prepared a short documentary on the efforts of these people that continues to inspire other groups in this region. {Ajay Dolke, Secretary SRUJAN on behalf of Tulshi Mata Bachat Gat, Mahadapur Village}

## Another step toward sustainable conservation of Cambodian bees



### The first Cambodian Federation for Bee Conservation and Community based Wild Honey Enterprises was successfully established and structured at the General Assembly in Phnom Penh.

The 24th June 2010 marked a greatly memorial event for the official mobilization of Cambodian honeybee hunters and community-based honey enterprises into one management umbrella called "Cambodian Federal for Bee Conservation and Community-based Wild Honey Enterprise", which was approved by community representatives at the General Assembly at Himawari Hotel in Phnom Penh.

To further strengthen the community-based honey enterprises, the Cambodian Federal for Bee Conservation and Community-based Wild Honey Enterprise has been initiated and a set of rules and protocols for the federation has been developed and extensively consulted among stakeholders. With financial support from the Ecosystems Grant Programme (EGP) of the IUCN Netherlands and other partner NGOs of Cambodia NTFP Working Group (CNWG), NTFP-EP and CNWG hosted a General Assembly on 24th June 2010, aiming for final review and approval on the draft standards and guidelines of honey federation and election for its president. This event was participated by representatives of honey collectors and community-based honey enterprises from six provinces (Mondulkiri, Koh Kong Kratie, Preah Vihar, Ratanakiri and Stung Treng), and non governmental organizations and governmental institutions like WWF Cambodia, CEDAC, CEPA, Pact Cambodia, The Asia Foundation DANIDA, ETEA and

Forestry Administration. At the General Assembly, a number of honey-sourced products like pure wild honey, honey cookies and green tea honey and bee-fed flowers were also displayed to participants.

The General Assembly was chaired by Mr Meoung Mean, head of Phnom Torp Cheang wild honey collectors, Koh Kong province, and other two community participants, Mr. Teng Rorn and Mr. Chhoeung Chhnay, were nominated to present the draft rules of Cambodian Federation for Bee Conservation and Community based Wild Honey Enterprises. The rest of community participants from respective provinces and representatives from NGOs made group discussions to review this draft honey standards. As a result of this comprehensive review, a total of 29 articles of 10 chapters were reviewed, revised, and approved. The General Assembly continued with election for the president of the federation, and as a result, one president and two vice presidents of the federation were successfully elected. The three elected candidates expressed their thanks to their members and committed to work hard and find opportunity to cooperate with government and NGOs to bring further success to the honey federation in future.

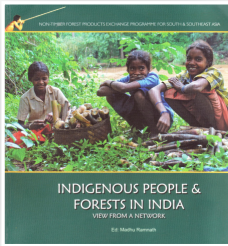
The General Assembly ended with successful outcome as expected and pleasure environment, and provided them an opportunity to build trustful relationship among honey collector groups from different provinces. {Khou Eanghourt, CNWG}



**INDIGENOUS PEOPLE & FORESTS IN INDIA:**

**View from a Network**  
(ed: Madhu Ramnath)

Over these past few years, EP India's work has centred around three major themes: policy and advocacy in the adivasi-forest context, conservation of natural resources, and livelihoods and access to markets. The collection of stories and case-studies in this book is a small window into the activities of the Indian network aimed at providing deeper insights as to how NTFPs hold some of keys to proper natural resource management, the livelihoods and traditions of tribal people and an insight into traditional management. For inquiries, please email: kf@keystone-foundation.org



**ANYAM**

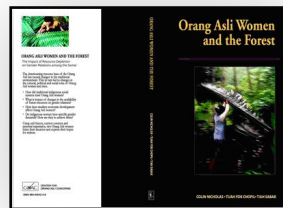


Anyam celebrates the under-appreciated craft & culture of pandanus weaving among the Orang Asli, the indigenous minorities of Peninsular Malaysia. The ethnobotany of Pandanus or screwpine is documented. Cultivation, harvesting practices as well as processing methods are explained

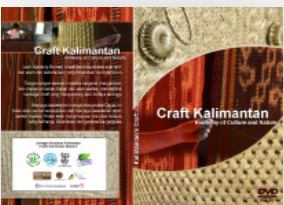
and illustrated by master weavers from Gerai OA. Dyes, dyeing techniques and different anyam weaving techniques are described as are origins of some motifs in the Orang Asli repertoire. This booklet can be purchased online via elevyn.com/shop/geraioa

**ORANG ASLI WOMEN AND THE FOREST: The Impact Of Resource Depletion On Gender Relations Among The Semai by Nicholas, Colin; Tijah Yok Chopil; Tiah Sabak**

This groundbreaking study focuses on the ways in which changing forest and land usage is impacting on Orang Asli women. Areas addressed include: how traditional society treated women; gender roles in relation to forest resources and new economic possibilities; women's expectations; and the role of the state. Using oral history, current contexts and personal experience, two Orang Asli women researchers relate their situation and express their hopes for redress. For inquiries, please email: gerakbudaya@pd.jaring.my / coac@streamyx.com



**CRAFT KALIMANTAN - HARMONY OF CULTURE AND NATURE**



In the heart of Borneo, indigenous communities have for generations, created works of art as part of their culture, naturally and effortlessly as breathing itself. Most of the numerous objects they create, from natural vegetation around their homes, have a practical application.

This documentary sends out the message that if we want to protect the culture of the Dayak communities, we must conserve their natural resources. In turn, the forest will then continue to inspire them and to give them values to pass on to future generations. Now is the time to respect and appreciate the products produced by indigenous peoples. For inquiries, please email info@ntfp.org.

from Lessons from my field visit to

**Sabah, Malaysia**

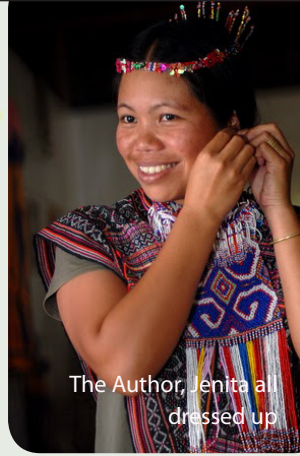
according to their respective names and so did the chieftain, but -- he hardly knew the names of the women! After the introductions, one woman commented that they were very glad because for the very first time, they were introduced individually. Likewise, the Chieftain also confessed that it was indeed his first time to know the respective names of the women villagers. I just grinned realizing that power is embedded in tradition and tradition is held hostage by the enculturation and institutionalization of patriarchal assertions. For decades, IP women were contented to play a supporting role in the community rather than to lead or take part in decision making.

This started a good discussion on how our respective work on crafts provides a venue for women empowerment as well as for self-expression. At the same time, it also highlights the tribe's identity, customs and traditions. Above all, it shows the crafts' relation to importance of forest conservation and sustainable resource management. Discussions also emphasized the importance of forming a group of women artisans for women empowerment and possible recognition.

On June 28th, we visited Pasisimpungan Ambatuh Ulu Tomani (PAUT), which is a very organized group that makes fine bamboo crafts. Similar to the experience we had in the second village, there was a fruitful discussion where everyone, especially women, was encouraged to cast away their doubts on their potentials and realized the potentials on crafts development. The head of PAUT organization started asking about 'pricing' and it was a good thing that, I instantly got an intelligent teacher -- in the person of Joanna -- who helped me to effectively explain and satisfactorily answer every query.

I am so thankful to NTFP-EP for the support and also to JOAS and Elevyn's invitation to join the Sabah field visit. Many Malay words were spoken similar to our local dialect and have the same meaning with T'boli language. Likewise, the experience provided me the learnings that Sabah IPs face similar problems that T'boli faces as well.

The exposure trip was over but I posed a question to myself about how IPs can preserve their lands and identity if government inculcates to IP's mind the stark image of life that most people have now grown accustomed to and made to believe as how things should be -- that is a life devoted to money. Like in our area, the government offers programs such as "Plant now, pay later" just to engage the communities in plantation. As an IP, I believe that development can only be meaningful when internal gender and peace advocacy program are strengthened. {Jenita Eko, LASSIWAI}



The Author, Jenita al dressed up

**Oh my goodness!**



**What's Wrong With The House?**

Soon after a typhoon struck the Sunderbans (Bangladesh), relief-agencies rushed in and started the construction of row after row of concrete box-type houses. With the corrugated iron roofs all brightly coloured - each agency has its own colour - the houses are tiny, but there are plenty of them.

When a family of Mawali honey hunters, while sitting in their airy home outside the coloured encampment, were asked the question in the title above, they looked at first bewildered. 'Nothing is wrong. It is comfortable. And look: the wood is sturdy and it bends with the wind. Yes, the roof will fly, but that's no big deal. Typhoons are normal for us and we can get the thatch back from the mangrove forest nearby. But nobody ever asked us about the house... or anything!

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