

SARAWAK

30 July - Bario, Borneo Highlands. At the occasion of the **Bario Food and Cultural Festival**, Puan Sri Jamilah Anu, wife of Sarawak Chief Minister, launched the book "**Highland Tales in**



Ba'Kelalan, Borneo Highlands

the Heart of Borneo" documenting the heritage of the highlands of Ba' Kelalan, Bario, Long Semadoh in Sarawak and Long Pa' Sia, Sabah. The illustrated 92 page book is published by FORMADAT, highland's grassroots and transboundary alliance Forum Masyarakat Adat Dataran Tinggi with support of the Sarawak Government and WWF. [Available at WWF-Malaysia Kuching Office, 7th floor

Bangunan Binamas, Padungan Road, Kuching; and through Formadat committee in Ba' Kelalan, Bario, Long Semadoh and Long Pa' Sia'. Softcover: RM40 and hardcover RM55. Proceeds going to Formadat.] - Source: "[Record highlanders' rich cultural heritage and folklores](#)" - Borneo Post online, 31 Jul. 2015.



August - Kuala Lumpur. Sape music player Mathew Ngau Jau, a Kenyah from Sarawak, has been proclaimed a national heritage by the Tourism and Culture Ministry. Besides being one of the leading sape masters, Mathew is an ardent advocate of Borneo's traditional music. [The sape, a traditional short-necked lute of the Borneo Highlanders, is the emblematic music instrument of Borneo. Malaysia's National Heritage Act 2005 provides that living persons can be proclaimed National Heritage. Other national heritage proclaimed at the same occasion were Malay wedding customs, durian glutinous rice and a sweetmeat made of glutinous rice from Melaka.] Source: "[Sape music player proclaimed national heritage](#)" - Borneo Post online, 12 Aug. 2015.

September - Kanowit. The chieftain of **Rumah Benjamin Angki longhouse** in Rantau Kemiding (close to Kanowit town, upriver from Sibul) calls for granting heritage status to his Iban longhouse. The traditional style wooden longhouse was built in 1936. With its 64-door, it is described as the longest in the district. It has a Homestay programme. - Source: "[79-year-old longhouse eyes heritage status](#)" - Borneo Post online, 1 Sept. 2015

9-11 October - Kuching. The old Court House complex was the venue of the **4th Borneo International Beads Conference**. The theme was "Stringing past to present".

21 Oct. - Kuching. Launch of an updated and expanded version of the book "**Sarawak Historical-Landmarks**" by Heidi Munan, honorary curator of the Sarawak Museum. At this occasion, the Minister of Tourism of Sarawak touched on **the project to make the old Kuching town a Heritage zone** "*starting from the St. Joseph's Catholic Cathedral and down to the Main Bazaar, Gambir Road, Fort Margherita to the Astana and right to the old State Legislative Assembly Building in Petra Jaya*". The project includes the construction of the new museum campus on the site of the former new wing of the Museum. - Source: [Abang Johari: Old Kuching town to be developed into heritage zone](#) - Borneo Post online, 21 Oct. 2015 and "[Abg Johari hopes to see more books on state's history, heritage](#)" - Borneo Post online, 22 Oct. 2015

24 October - Bung Bratak (near Bau). **Launching of the construction of the Bung Bratak heritage centre.** The 300 meter high Bung Bratak, a hill off the Bau-Lundu road, is presented as the original and ancient ancestral home of the Jagoi-Bratak Bidayuhs. The project has received a RM 8 Million grant from the federal Ministry of Tourism and Culture and the construction will be implemented by the Sarawak Public Works Department with a target completion date of September 2017. It is planned to have "two traditional longhouses – one for accommodation of up to 100 guests and another one for a big conference hall, function rooms, an office and a mini museum" on the 20ha site. The formerly NCR land was "assigned to the Bung Bratak Heritage Association (BBHA) by way of an agreement". - Source: [RM8 million Bung Bratak heritage centre gets off ground](#) - Borneo Post online, 22 Oct. 2015 and "[Complete BBHC Within Contract Period, Says Nogeh](#)"- Bernama, 25 Oct. 2015

20 November - Kuching. The Minister of Tourism of Sarawak announced that **Kuching's Reservoir Park** (located next to the Museum grounds) **will be turned into a Unity Park**. He said the Park will have facilities such as gazebos representing Sarawak's various ethnic groups, a proposed design being expected from Kuching North City municipality (DBKU). Source: "[Big unity, tourism plans for Reservoir Park](#)" - The Star online, 20 Nov. 2015

November - Kuching. The construction of the massive [covered arcade for India Street](#), Kuching, is progressing and works have started for the construction of the "[golden bridge](#)" across the Sarawak river (see our recent articles on these projects).



India Street, 16 Nov. 2015 (SHS photo, 16 Nov. 2015)



Start of construction of the 'Golden Bridge' (SHS photo-16 Nov. 2015)

MALAYSIA-WIDE

13 November. The Star newspaper points to the **limitations of the National Heritage Act in the control of underwater treasure hunters**: the Act can only take action within 12 nautical miles of the country's territorial waters. A number of ancient shipwrecks, dating from the prosperous maritime trade that spanned over more than 100 years, dot the Malaysian waters. 24 have so far been discovered by the Malaysian Authorities. Illegal treasure hunting is commonly acknowledged. - Source: "[Hard to charge treasure hunters](#)" - The Star online, 13 Nov. 2015

Penang

5 October - Penang. A new **integrated heritage database system (IHDS)** is being developed by *George Town World Heritage Incorporated (GTWHI)* to assist in preservation and monitoring of **Penang's** cultural legacy. The project will produce a smart map based inventory of Penang's heritage sites, enabling policymakers to better monitor and enhance conservation. The technology is provided by geospatial solutions provider Esri Malaysia. - Source: "[Heritage group works to protect Penang culture with smart mapping technology](#)" - The Malaysian Insider, 5 Oct. 2015

October. Penang. George Town has been rated #4 city to visit in 2016 by the travel guide publisher **Lonely Planet**. "*George Town might be widely known for its Unesco World Heritage-listed streetscape, but of late it's also emerged as the crucible of an artsy, modern Malaysia. You're likely to find funky street art amid the traditional Chinese shophouses these days, and versatile exhibition spaces showcasing avant garde art, film, music and dance are springing up left and right. Throw in a few boutique guesthouses and you've got a recipe for one of Asia's most inventive and diverse arts communities.*" This will undoubtedly boost further Penang's flow of visitors. - Source: "[Lonely Planet webpage](#)" and "[George Town named among Top 10 Cities by Lonely Planet](#)" - Malay Mail online, 28 Oct. 2015

16 November - Penang. A State assemblyman **advocates for the state government to set up a special fund at State level to assist in the financing of the renovation and conservation of heritage buildings**, to complement the funds allocated by the Federal Government. He proposed that some of the fees collected by the local councils from hotel stays be channelled into this fund and that the fund be administrated by GTWHI (George Town World Heritage Incorporated). The cost to renovate and conserve a heritage building could be three times more expensive than having work done on a normal building, so many heritage property owners would not have the means to do it, especially if they were not running a business, he said. - Source: "[Penang should set up special fund for heritage conservation, says rep](#)" - The Malaysian Insider, 17 Nov. 2015

28 November - Penang. A "**12 Hour Heritage Challenge**" was organised by KDU University College Penang. The 150 participants, split in teams of 5, had to solve puzzles at 15 heritage sites stops. Source: "[Fun hunt for heritage facts](#)", The Star online, 28 Nov. 2015