SEAMEO CENTRES POLI CY RESEARCH NETWORK (CPRN) SUMMIT 2025

BUILDING BRIDGES TO A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE:
INCLUSIVE COLLABORATION AND INNOVATION IN EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND CULTURE

TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE AND CULTURAL HERITAGE CONSERVATION IN KAMPONG AYER OF BRUNEI DARUSSALAM THROUGH TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND AWARENESS EDUCATION

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GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION & CHARACTERISTICS

Latitude: 4°53'25"N

Longitude: 114°56'32"E

Location: Northern Bank of the Brunei River

Characteristics: Highly urbanized drainage systems of Sg.Kedayan, Damuan & Sg. Kianggeh.

Sg. Brunei is a tidal inlet.

It is well-mixed estruary with longitudinal salinity gradient; low freshwater input.

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Traditional Architecture

- Traditional architecture refers to building styles and techniques rooted in the customs, culture, and practices of a specific region or community, often passed down through generations. It emphasizes the use of locally available materials and construction methods, resulting in structures closely tied to their environment and reflecting the identity of the people.

INTRODUCTION

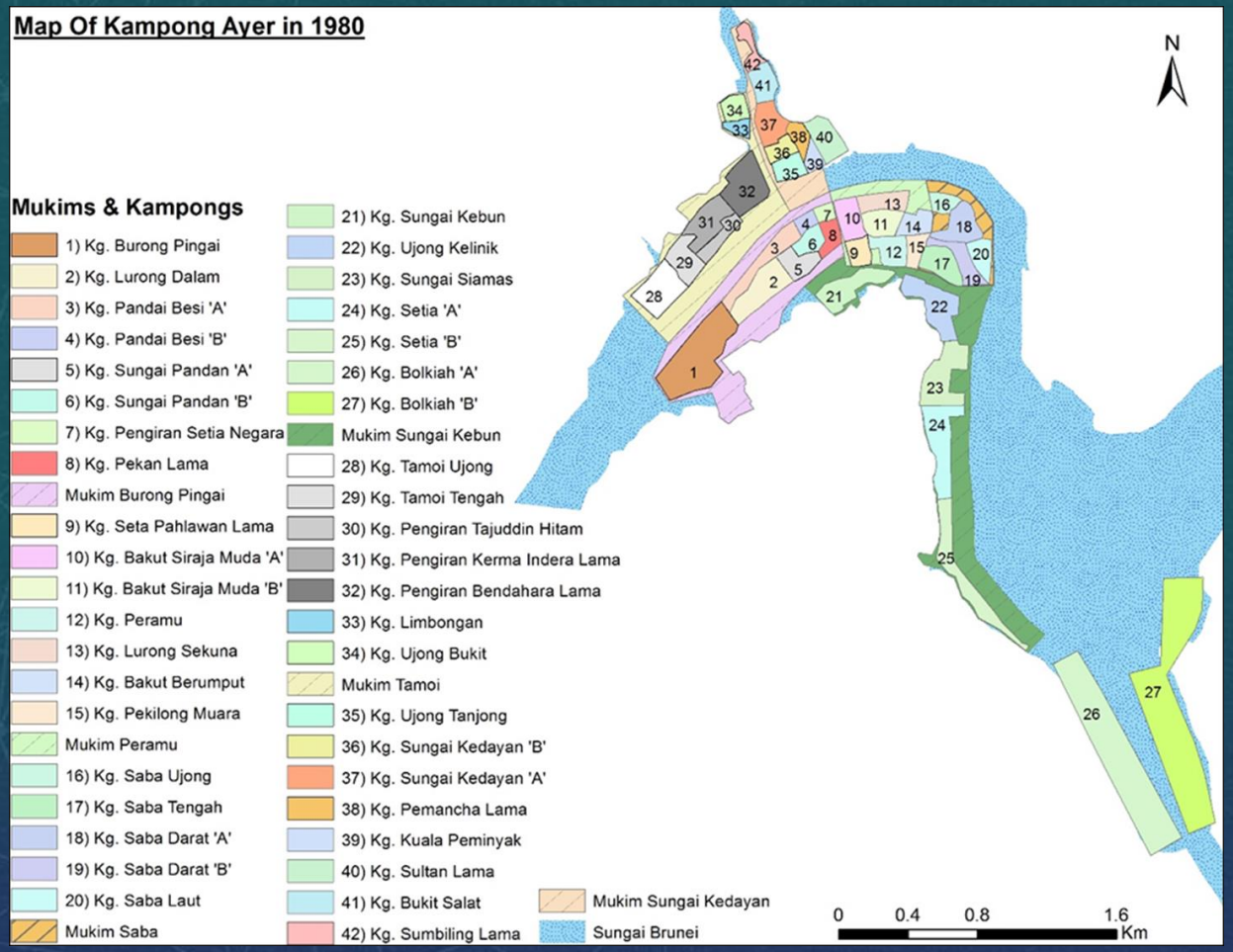
- With an area of over 10 sq.km and about 30,000 inhabitants are settled in 42 villages. Kampong Ayer is the largest water village in the world. Even with the advent of science and technology in the country.
- Kampong Ayer has stared in 1003 as a trade centre and later on it became the administrative centre.
- Kampong Ayer remains a unique national heritage that is a source of pride for the people of Brunei.
- Its beauty lies in its uniqueness of flooding above seawater appearing as a island when viewed from the air.
- A visit to kampong Ayer gives visitors a valuable insight into the culture and history of Brunei Darussalam. The beauty of Kampong Ayer has led to it being called “ the Venice of the east.
- During the glorious region of sultan Balkiah (1485-1524), Kampong Ayer was already established as an administrative and governing centre of the Brunei Empire.

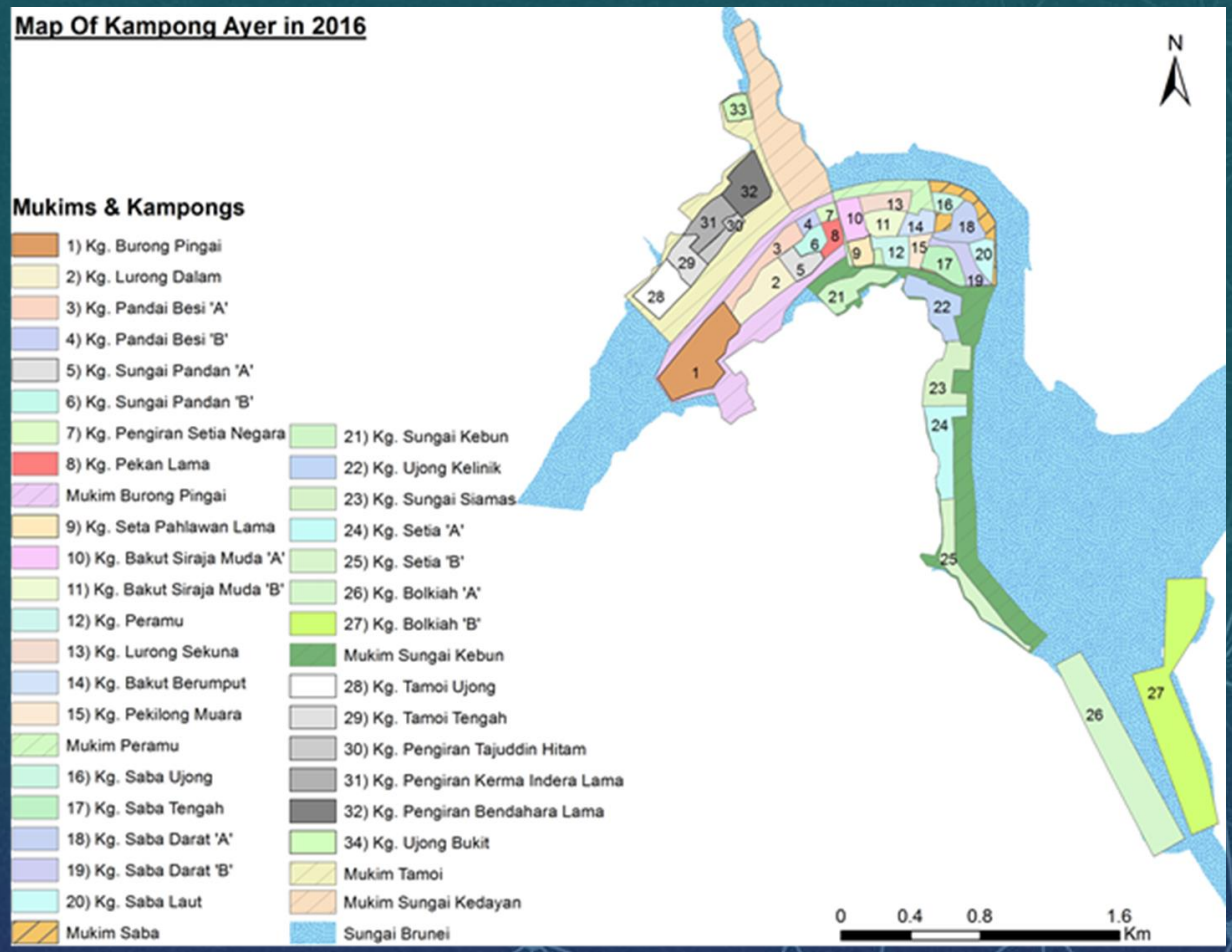
AIM AND OBJECTIVES

- To understand the unique traditional architecture and cultural heritage of Kampong Ayer through history, architecture, and socio economy

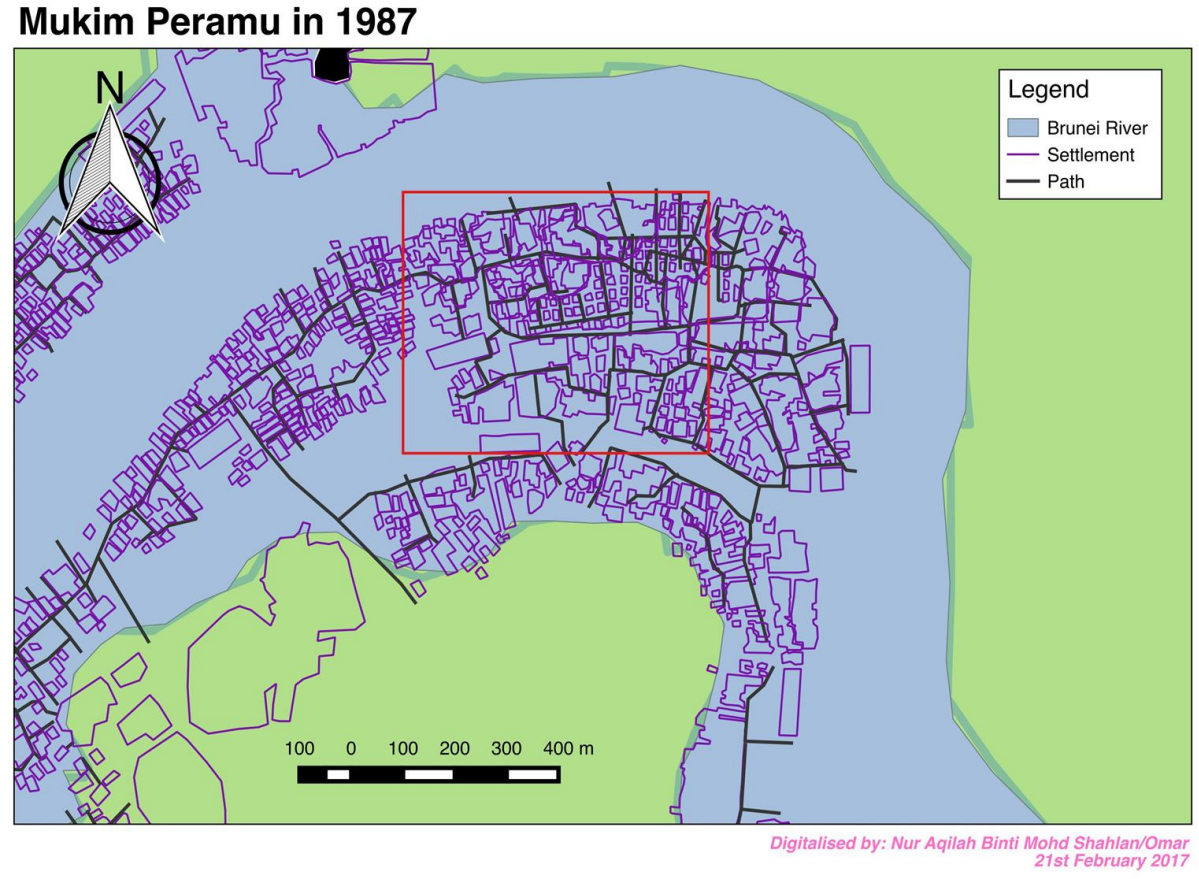
- Objectives
- i) To Study the past and present unique aspect of traditional architecture of Kampong ayer in Bandar Seri Begawan.
- ii) To analyze the changes of the architectural structure between traditional and modern houses in Kampong Ayer
- iii) to discuss the correlation between tourism, tangible and intangible heritage and socio-economic status in Kampong Ayer

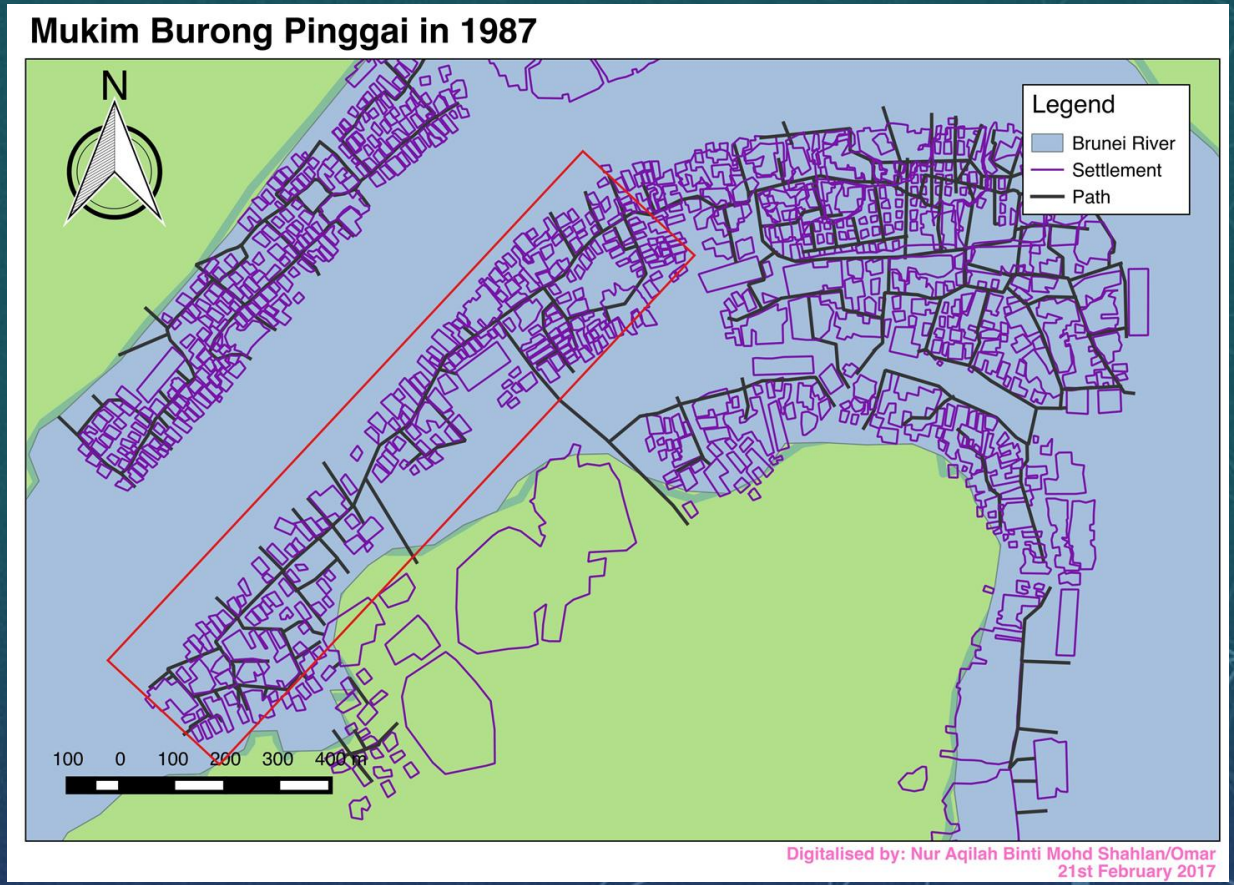
KG AYER IN 1980 AND IN 2016





KAMPONG AYER





NOTIONS OF OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

- The individuality components of the world's heritage are characterized by their specificity and diversity, reflecting the values of each culture and region.
- The concept of universal value refers to genuine/ authentic examples of the heritage of different cultures as component parts of the universal heritage of humankind.
- The definition of the outstanding universal value of a particular heritage site should thus be based on a critical, comparative study that takes into account that cultural phenomena concerned.
- Considering the complexity and diversity of heritage in different cultures, there is great variety of sources of information to be taken into account.

WHC HAS REFERED FOUR ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

a. To identify, on the basis of nominations of cultural and natural properties of outstanding universal value which are to be protected under the convention and to list those properties on the world heritage list;

b. Monitor the state of conservation of properties inscribed in the world heritage list in liaison with the state parties;

c. To decide in case of urgent need which included in the world heritage list are to be inscribed on the list of heritage in danger;

d. To determine in what way and under what conditions the resources in the world heritage fund can most advantageously be used to assist parties, as far as possible, in the protection of their properties of outstanding universal value.

UNIQUE ASPECT AND CULTURAL IDENTIY

- Cultural Diversity
- Unique Cultural Aspects and Identity
- Special Architecture and Malay Housing Pattern
- Food habit diversity and Music
- Handicrafts
- Special Indigenous medicinal treatment
- Indigenous knowledge practicing for livelihoods and economic improvement

UNIQUE TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE

PROBLEM AND CHALLENGES

- Kampong Ayer is reducing its originality
- Settlements and population is decreasing
- Degrading its diversity and economic and livelihoods
- Degrading its cultural identity
- Degrading cultural Heritage
- Shrinking the Water village territorial areas
- Degrading water quality in both rivers (Brunei River and Kedayen River basins area)
- Community livelihood insecurity
- Not evaluating considering as universal values

GLOBAL STATUS OF WORLD HERITAGE SITES

- Up to this day, 176 countries have joined the UNESCO convention, meanwhile 1052 world heritage sites (Cultural 814, Natural 203, Mixed 35 and Transboundary 34 sites are inscribed by UNESCO) in 128 countries have been put under protection. There is no site inscribed in Brunei Darussalam.

- On the basis of UNESCO conference 1972, some criteria have been established for both cultural and natural site selections. UNESCO recognized the increase in threats to the worlds cultural and natural heritage and began efforts in the preservation of mankind's priceless and irreplaceable possessions of outstanding universal value (UNESCO, 1999).

PUBLIC PERCEPTION TO WORLD HERITAGE

Cultural Heritate and Natural heritage are not renewable or irreplaceable. It is not only one nation's property but also property of mankind as a whole.

The loss through destruction or disappearance of any heritage is the loss of all the people of the world.

Parts of this heritage because of their exceptional qualities can be considered to be outstanding universal value and as such special protection against the dangers, which increasingly threaten them, should be implemented.

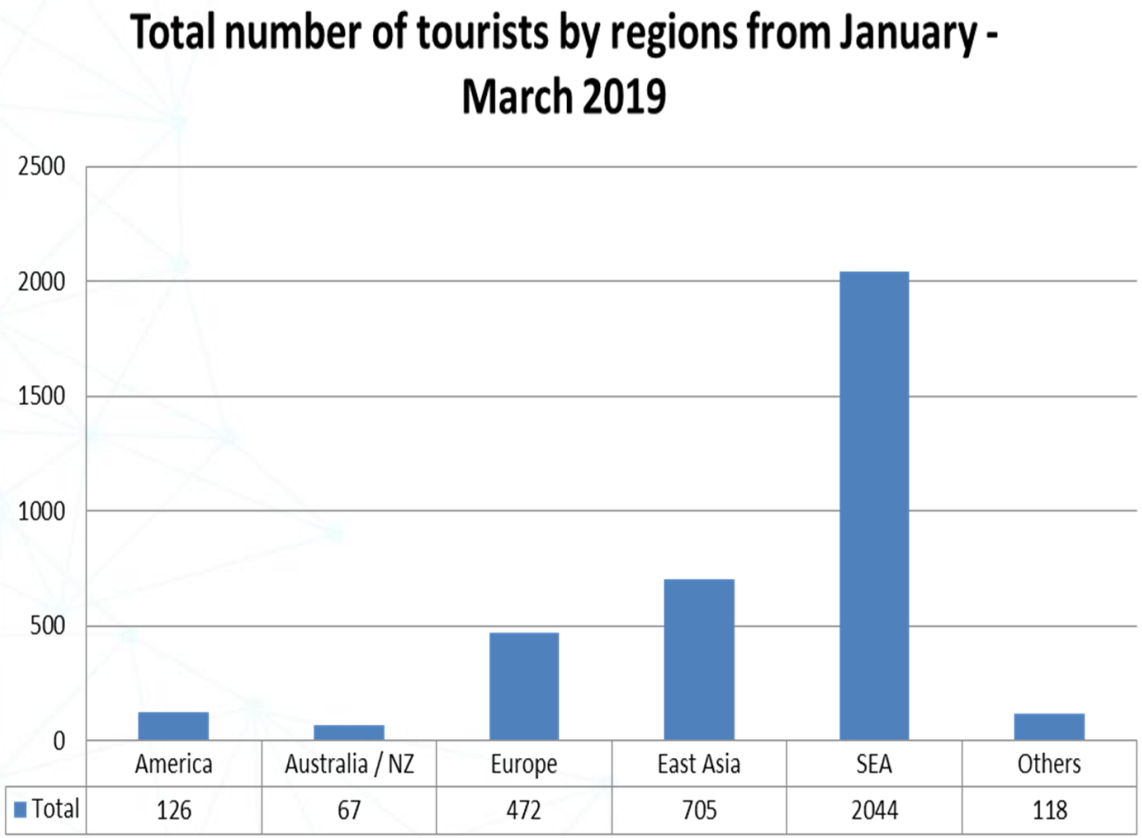
An attempt to reduce this hostile situation and to ensure, the proper identification, protection, conservation and preservation of the world's irreplaceable heritage, the member states of UNESCO adopted in 1972

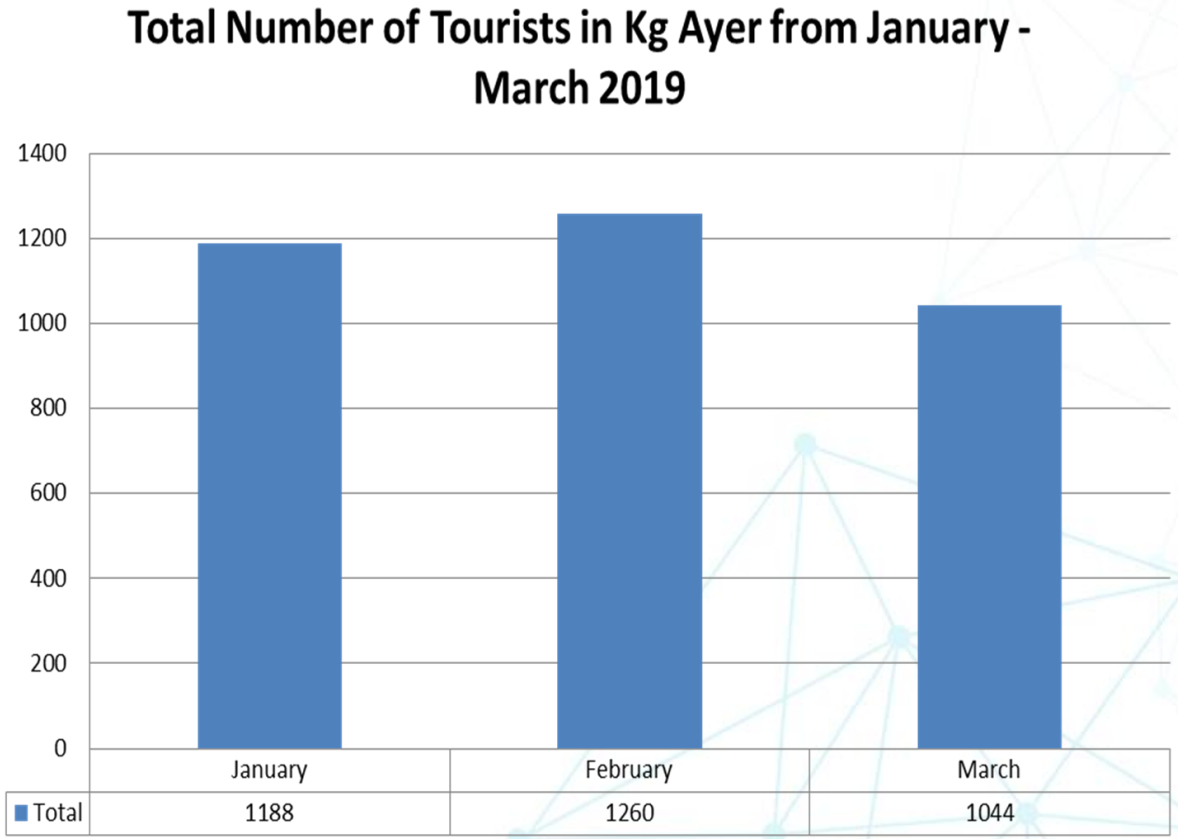
SOCIO-ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

Past	Present
• Padian & Pengalu • Oil • Cutch • Fishing • Rubber production • Handicrafts • Black/silver smiths • Sago	• Small entrepreneurship eg: floating market selling varieties of goods • Restaurant on water eg: outside their house on the wide balcony • Water taxi • Homestay Lodge

HOME STAY WITH MODERN ARCHITECTURE

TOURIST IN KAMPONG AYER

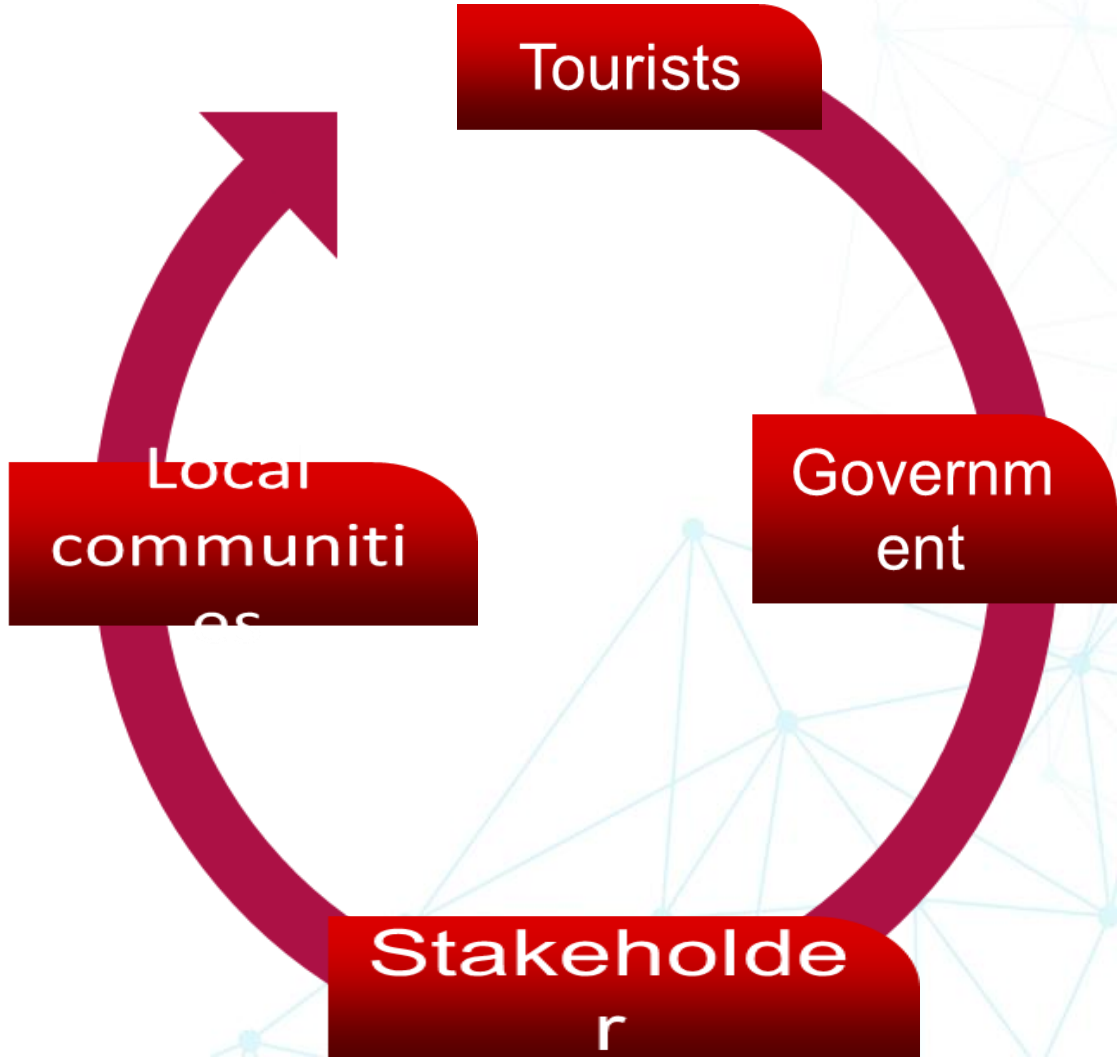




BENEFITS OF TOURISM

BENEFITS OF TOURISM TO CULTURAL HERITAGE

1	Social	• Creates enjoyable opportunities for both local residents and visitors attracted to the cultural arts, history and preservation.
2	Economic	• Helps encourage the development and maintenance of existing community amenities
3	Environmental	• Helps encourage a culture of preservation • Boost awareness of the tourist site, attraction or



Floating Architecture

TYPES OF TRADITIONAL HOUSES (1900-1940S)

1. Rumah Belah Bubung Serambi *Double Sloped-Roof with Serambi House*

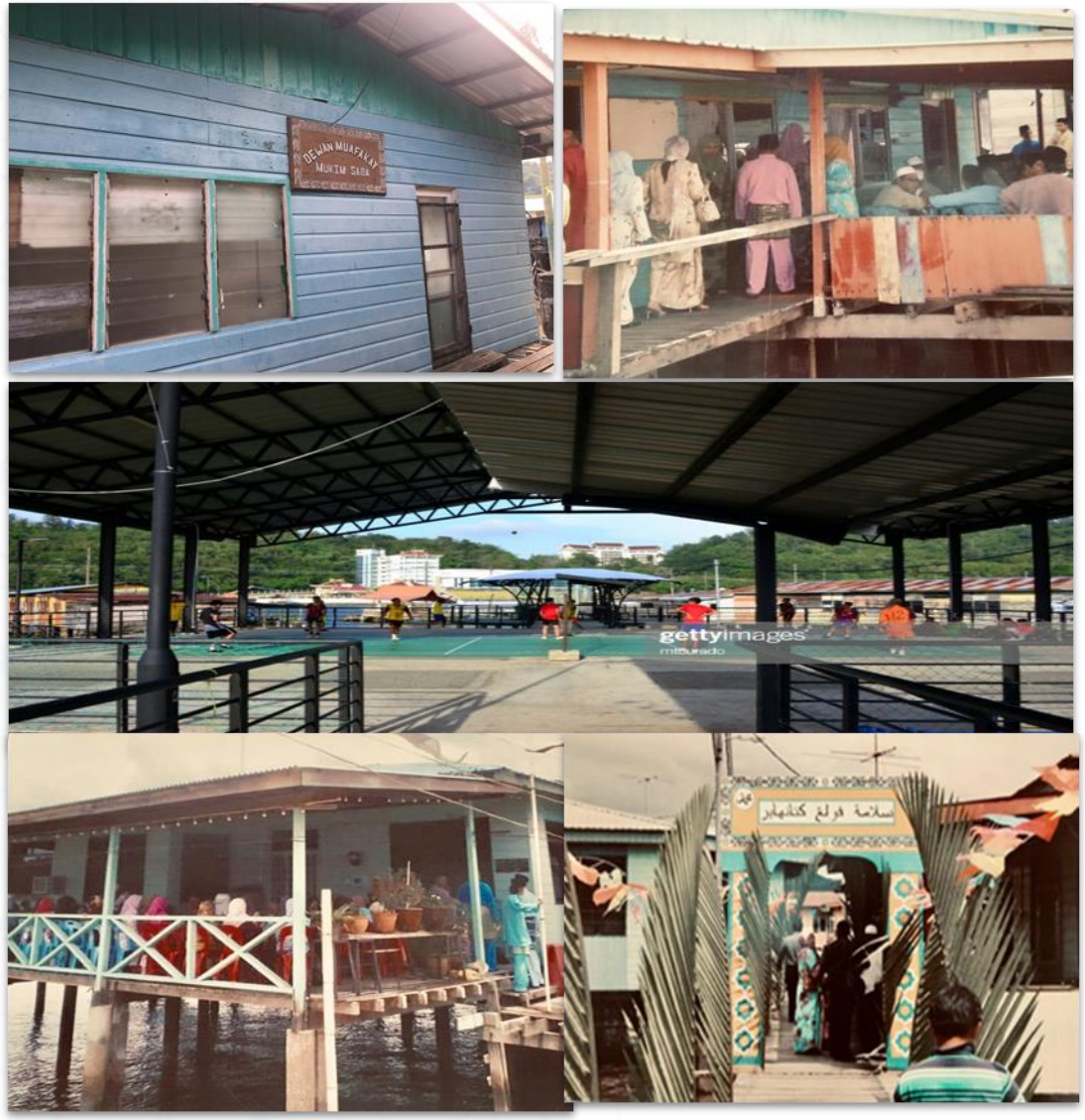
2. Rumah Belah Bubung *Double Sloped-Roof House*

3. Rumah Berloteng *House with Loteng*

4. Rumah Potong Limas *Potong Limas House*

5. Rumah Belah Bubung Belanggar *Belanggar House*

CULTURAL EVENT AT TRADITIONAL HOUSES



Events	Past	Present
Wedding ceremony	Share houses spacing; veranda	Some still hold events at homes but mostly rent hall on land
Family event (tahlil & doa selamat)	Living room, foyer	Living room, foyer, rented hall on land
Festive month (Eg. Eid Fitr/Hajj)	Living room, foyer, and neighbouring front foyer/veranda	Still the same except some may rent out community hall on land
Social Activities (Eg. Sports, Meetings)	Outdoor: On water (Eg. Ragata) Indoor: Individual houses/Veranda	Outdoor: Open space/Community space Indoor: Community Hall (Balai Raya)

Uniqueness of cultural Goods

ARCHITECTURAL VIEW MODERN & OLD

CONCLUDING REMARKS

- Kampong Ayer is a unique water village in Bandar Seri Begawan; in Brunei Darussalam.
- It has high Traditional Architectural and cultural diversity and universal high values of creativity of human kind;
- Kampong Ayer water village is the city land mark as well as unique traditional built environment and cultural identity of Brunei Darussalam.

- The Tangible and Intangible heritage of Kampong Ayer has high universal values, so it is important to protect and conserve the Traditional Architecture within the framework of national and international conservation policies as well as develop tourism facilities and awareness education should be develop for conservation purposes.

- All these characters and values can be fulfilled the UNESCO World Heritage site selection criteria.
- Therefore Kampong Ayer can be nominated as a World Cultural Heritage site in Bandar Seri Begawan and UNESCO should declare as 1st World Cultural Heritage site in Brunei Darussalam.

Thank You for Your Attention

Questions?

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