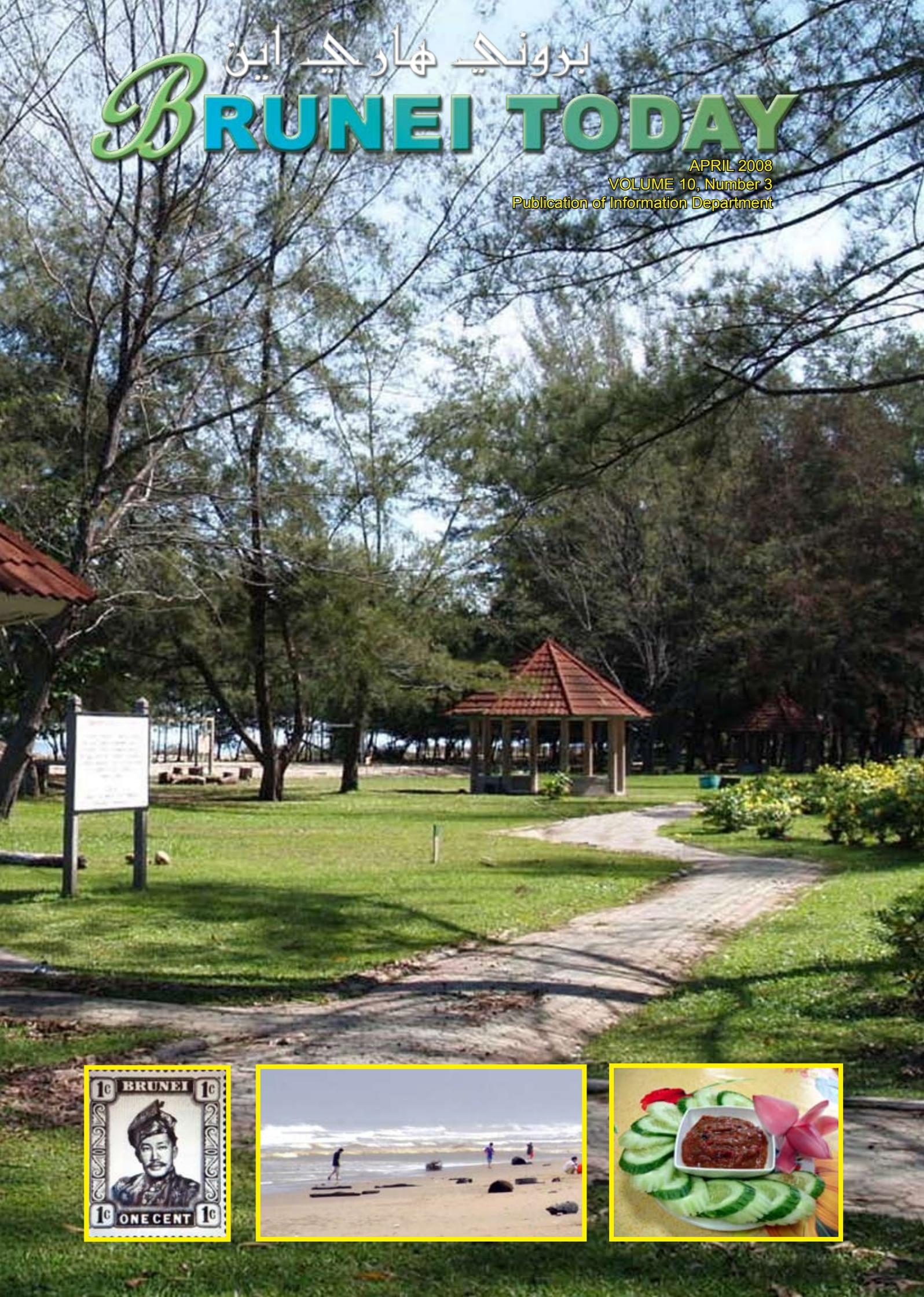


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POSTAL SERVICES



HISTORY

A postage stamp bearing a Brooketon postmark of April 24, 1894 is one of the earliest known stamps used in Brunei Darussalam. It was a Sarawak stamp used at a small post office established in 1893 for the coal-mining community at Rajah Brooke's colliery at Brooketon (now known as Muara). The post office was managed by the Sarawak Government which operated a monthly mail service to and from Kuching until early 1907 when copies of Sarawak

stamps bearing Brooketon cancellations were known throughout the period.

On October 11, 1906 a proper post office was established with the signing of the Treaty of Friendship. Based in the capital, it was built by the British Resident in Brunei. In 1984, the Postal Services Department came under the purview of the Ministry of Communications.

POST OFFICES, VENDORS AND AGENTS

Currently there are 24 post offices nationwide with 15 in the Brunei-Muara district; three in Tutong; five in Belait; and one in Temburong.

In addition, there are eight postal agents, 53 stamp vendors and two mini post offices throughout the country.

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

There is a wide range of products and services offered such as stamps; bulk posting; air/sea parcel service; air/sea mail; mail insurance; registered letter; express mail services; road tax payment; private mail; locked bag; COD parcel philatelic services; postal order; speed post and many more.

Post offices today have expanded its services to not only those of postal turning it into a multi-purpose centre. Members of the public are now able to pay their electricity, telephone and water bills; renew their driving license, insurances and road tax at the post offices, making it more convenient to the community.



Mail Processing Centre in Old Airport, Berakas.





Counter Delivery Parcel in Mail Processing Centre.

Various services are available at the postals.



WAKTU KAUNTER POS DIBUKA
POSTAL COUNTER OPENING HOURS
000.....

PENERIMAAN PERKHIDMATAN POS
 Acceptance Of Postal Services
 ISNIN - KHAMIS DAN SABTU
 Monday - Thursday and Saturday
 8.00 PAGI/a.m - 4.30 PETANG/p.m

JUMAAT/Friday
 8.00 PAGI/a.m - 11.00 PAGI/a.m
 2.00 PETANG/p.m - 4.00 PETANG/p.m

PENERIMAAN PERKHIDMATAN AGENSI
 Acceptance Of Agency Services
 ISNIN - KHAMIS DAN SABTU
 Monday - Thursday and Saturday
 8.00 PAGI/a.m - 3.00 PETANG/p.m

JUMAAT/Friday
 8.00 PAGI/a.m - 11.00 PAGI/a.m
 2.00 PETANG/p.m - 3.00 PETANG/p.m

PENYERAHAN BENDA-BENDA POS MELALUI PEMERIKSAAN KASTAM
 Delivery Of Postal Items Through Custom Inspection
 ISNIN - KHAMIS
 Monday - Thursday
 8.00 PAGI/a.m - 11.30 PAGI/a.m
 1.30 PETANG/p.m - 3.30 PETANG/p.m

SABTU/Saturday
 8.00 PAGI/a.m - 10.30 PAGI/a.m
 1.30 PETANG/p.m - 3.30 PETANG/p.m



Postal Services are efficient and reliable.



A Post Office in Kiulap.





General Post Office in Bandar Seri Begawan.

100 YEARS OF POSTAL SERVICES

Brunei's Postal Services recently celebrated its 100th year anniversary. Hundred years of age, the contribution of the postal services to our country has been significant and cannot be ignored.

Its existence today proves that postal services are still relevant despite of its existing competitors.

The existence of private couriers in providing express mail service and also lately the internet, e-mail, short message service (SMS), multimedia service (MMS) and others have undoubtedly challenged the existence of postal services not only locally but globally.

In Brunei Darussalam, the volume of mail reached its lowest in 2003, where only 9.4 million letters were handled compared to 13.2 million in 2001. In 2004 and 2005, the volume showed an increase with 9.7 million and 11.5 million respectively.

The existence of competitors, however, should not be seen as a threat but as an opportunity for the Postal Services Department to develop and be more efficient. Now, the Postal Services Department is in the process of implementing a new project namely the Counter Automation.

With the creativity and commitment by the Postal Services Department, along with the support of relevant agencies, the department will be able to explore these new opportunities that will not only benefit the department but its customers too. This project began its operation at the end of last year and one of the efforts in diversifying its services.

With the counter automation and hybrid mail projects in progress, the Postal Services Department hope that it can fulfill its vision and mission which is to become a business, information and services centre.

To commemorate its 100th year anniversary, a Stamps Gallery and a 100th anniversary of Postal Services stamps were launched by the Minister of Communications, Pehin Dato Seri Setia Haji Awang Abu Bakar on November 7, 2006. The ceremony was held at the General Post Office in the capital.

With the aim to promote the products of postal services, the Stamp Gallery houses an assortment of stamps by the Postal Services Department, including commemorative, definitive and thematic stamps, which recorded important historical events of the country.

The opening of the Stamps Gallery was also hoped to encourage the public to take up stamp collection, and hopefully boost revenues for the government.

Meanwhile, on February 6, 2007 Brunei's Postal Services Department achieved another milestone when it launched a Joint Thematic Stamp Issue with Malaysia.

The launching ceremony was officiated by the Deputy

Minister of Communications, Dato Paduka Haji Yusof bin Haji Abdul Hamid, at the General Post Office in the capital. Also present at the function was Malaysian High Commissioner to Brunei Darussalam, His Excellency Dato Ali bin Abdullah.

With the theme 'Unique Marine Life', a joint stamp issue between Brunei Darussalam and Malaysia is the first of its kind being undertaken by both countries. The collaboration was the result of an agreement reached at the Asean Head of Post Administrative Meeting. Its objectives are to foster closer relationships between Brunei Postal Services Department and Pos Malaysia as well as to promote the beauty of the natural environment of both countries.

The stamps have four designs; two by Brunei Postal Services; and another two by Pos Malaysia. The stamps feature 'Ikan Buntal Berintik' (Spotted Boxfish) and 'Bebakan Takat' (Orange-striped Triggerfish) in Brunei Darussalam and 'Ikan Lapu' or Leaf Scorpion fish and 'Siput Kurita Berkebuk' or Chambered Nautilus found in Malaysia.



Among the products of postal services.



A stamp released in conjunction with the 50th birthday of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam on July 15, 1996.



Stamp gallery in General Post Office in the capital.

First Day Cover issued for the 40th Anniversary of Girl Guides Association on October 7, 1994.

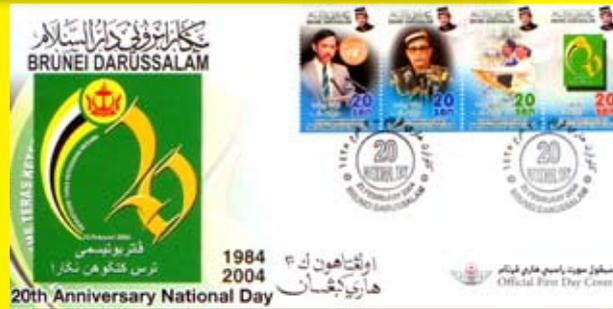


First Day Cover issued on October 2, 2000 depicting Brunei Local Floral Services.



Issued on March 30, 1991. One of four stamps on Proboscis Monkey for World Wide Fund for Nature.

A 20th Anniversary National Day Official First Day Cover issued on February 23, 2004.



Stamps issued on July 15, 2000 entitled "The Sultan of Brunei Reigning in the 20th Century (1901-2000)".



A stamp issued on March 1, 1952.



Stamps issued on March 1, 1952.

Beaches

Brunei Darussalam situated on the north-west coast of the Island of Borneo, with a coastline of about 161 kilometres own a number of beautiful beaches.

There are a number of recreational beaches ranging from the popular Muara and Serasa Beach in Brunei-Muara District; Seri Kenangan Beach in Tutong District to a number of scattered beaches along the Belait District.

With coastal waves which are approximately between one to three metres high, beaches in this country are also popular for family activities and holiday and leisure activities for everyone.

Muara Beach

One of the popular beaches in Brunei-Muara District is the Muara Beach. About 27 kilometres from Bandar Seri Begawan, this beach is an ideal destination for family and leisure activities. The protected beach which also features concrete shades and seats are located around the area for the convenience of the beach visitors. Amenities here include a well-equipped picnic area, a children's playground, changing and toilet facilities, as well as hawker stalls.





Beaches are popular for family and leisure activities.



Jerudong Beach





Jerudong Beach

Situated right next to the Jerudong Wet Market, this beach has become popular over recent years as it has become one of the best places to find fresh fish as fishermen only need to dock their boats at the nearby beach. This beach, similar with Tungku Beach has a reconstructed beach shore which are deposited with boulders that are aligned along its manmade spits. These concrete boulders also ensure that the sandy shores are protected from further erosion from the waves. The Jerudong Beach also features its own fish and vegetable market that is conveniently constructed within the area.



*Serasa Beach is only
10 minutes drive from
Muara Town.*



Serasa Beach

Meanwhile, a mere 10 minutes drive from Muara, lively Serasa Beach is a haven for water sports enthusiasts especially during His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam birthday celebrations.

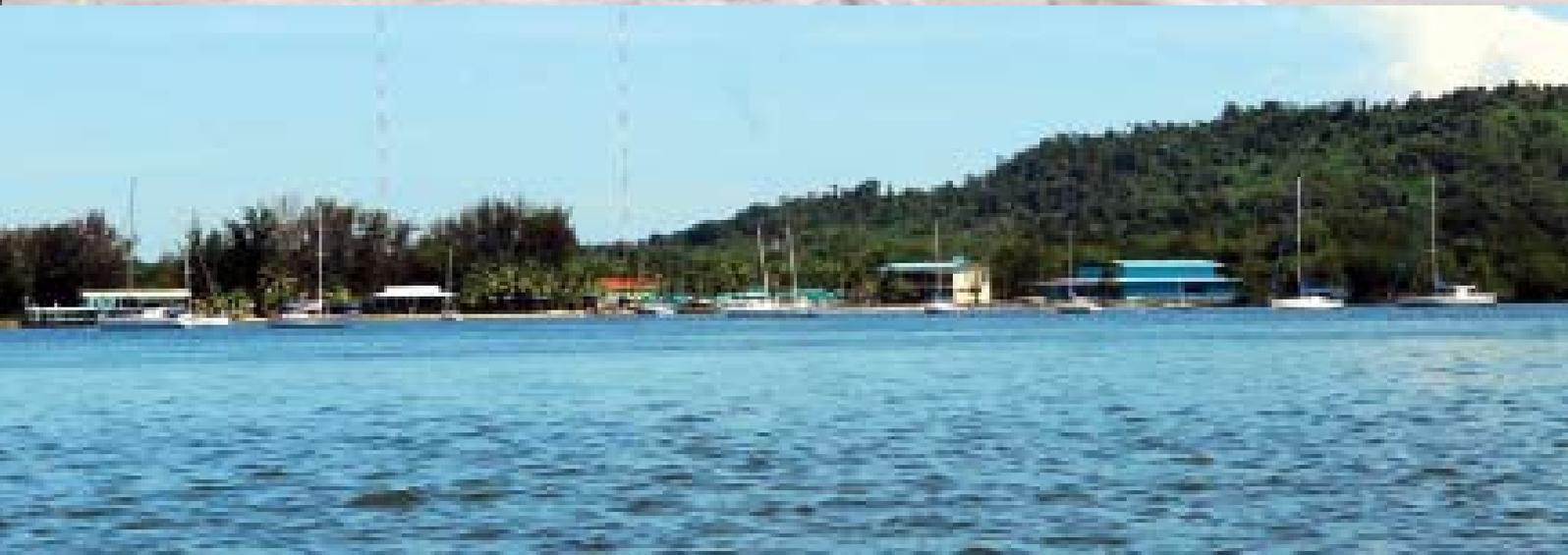
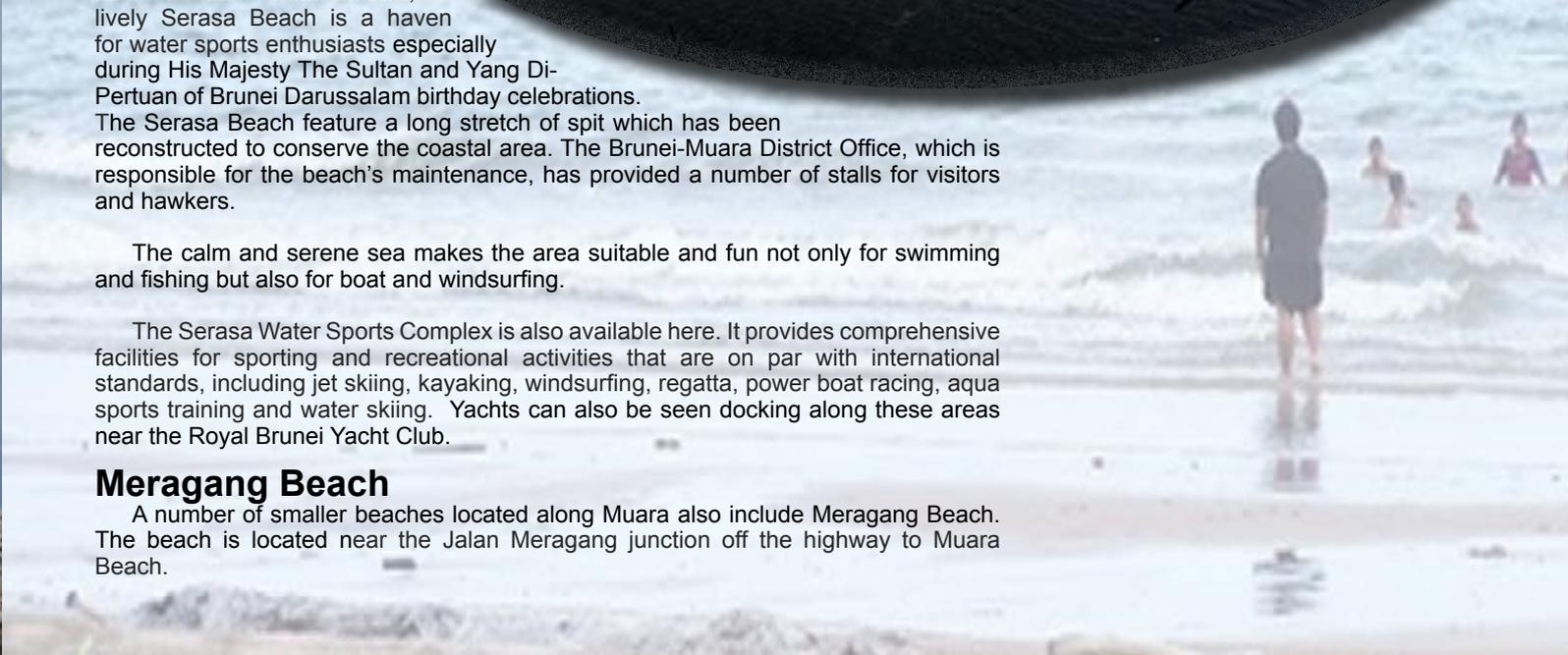
The Serasa Beach feature a long stretch of spit which has been reconstructed to conserve the coastal area. The Brunei-Muara District Office, which is responsible for the beach's maintenance, has provided a number of stalls for visitors and hawkers.

The calm and serene sea makes the area suitable and fun not only for swimming and fishing but also for boat and windsurfing.

The Serasa Water Sports Complex is also available here. It provides comprehensive facilities for sporting and recreational activities that are on par with international standards, including jet skiing, kayaking, windsurfing, regatta, power boat racing, aqua sports training and water skiing. Yachts can also be seen docking along these areas near the Royal Brunei Yacht Club.

Meragang Beach

A number of smaller beaches located along Muara also include Meragang Beach. The beach is located near the Jalan Meragang junction off the highway to Muara Beach.



Seri Kenangan Beach

The popular beach in Tutong District which faces directly to the Tutong River, separated by a long stretch of road is the Seri Kenangan Beach.

Seri Kenangan Beach is a long and golden sandy beach rather than a wide area of coastal sands making the place perfect for strolling along or jogging during the morning or afternoon beside a lovely spot for picnics, fishing and swimming. During weekends a variety of water sports activities are available at this beach including water jet skiing; and beach scooters are available for lease around the beach area. The beach is a five-minute drive from Tutong town.

Lumut Beach

Meanwhile, for those who prefer a day of sun and sand while in Belait District, Lumut Beach is a perfect place. It offers complete facilities for picnicking, jogging and family outings. Added features here are the huts and shelters especially designed for visitor's relaxation.

Huts and shelters are especially designed for visitors to relax and unwind.



Berakas Forest Reserves Beach

For those who enjoy trekking, the beach along the Berakas Forest Reserves provide these along with a protected forestry that is conveniently located besides the beach which is quite popular for picnickers due to the availability of shady areas.

Tungku Beach

A perfect spot to watch the sunset, Tungku Beach is situated near Jerudong. To further protect this beach, concrete boulders were constructed along its sandy shores.





Sambal belacan is made by mixing belacan with chilli peppers, minced garlic, shallot paste and sugar.

Belacan

Belacan, a Malay variety of shrimp paste, is prepared from fresh tiny shrimp of a species known as *bubuk* in Malay. They are mashed into a paste and buried for several months where the fermented shrimp are then dug up, fried and hard-pressed into cakes.

Belacan is used as an ingredient in many dishes, or eaten on its own with rice. A common preparation is *sambal belacan*, made by mixing *belacan* with chilli peppers, minced garlic, shallot paste and sugar and then fried. The aroma from the frying mixture is very pungent but an absolute delight.

History

Possibly, fishermen first created the salted aged shrimp product as a means of preserving their catch. Another theory is that it was created so tiny apparently unmarketable shrimp could be sold. Whatever the reason, shrimp paste is now an integral part of highly regarded Southeast Asian cuisine. The shrimp paste industry has been important to the development of many coastal Asian communities.

The Industry

Shrimp paste continues to be made by fishing families in coastal villages. They sell it to vendors, middlemen or distributors who packaged it for resale to consumers. Shrimp paste is often known for the region it comes from since production techniques and quality vary from village to village. Some villages such as Batu Marang are well known for producing very fine shrimp paste. The shrimp paste are sold at a price of \$10 per kilo.

Making shrimp paste

Preparation techniques can vary greatly; however, the following procedure is most common in Brunei and Southeast Asia.

After being caught, small shrimp are unloaded, rinsed and drained before being dried. Drying can be done on plastic mats on the ground in the sun, on metal beds on low stilts, or using other methods. After several days, the shrimp-salt mixture will darken and turn into a thick pulp.

If the shrimp used to produce the paste were small, it is ready to be served as soon as the individual shrimp have decayed beyond recognition. If the shrimp are larger, fermentation will



take longer and the pulp will be grinded to provide a smoother consistency. The fermentation/grinding process is usually repeated several times until the paste fully matures. The paste is then dried and cut into bricks by the villagers to be sold. Dried shrimp paste does not require refrigeration.

Shrimp paste can be found in nations outside Southeast Asia in markets catering to Asian customers. Shrimp pastes from other countries are also available in Asian supermarkets and through mail order.

Fishermen catch the shrimps, drain them of water, salt them immediately, then dry them on huge metal beds placed on low stilts. The salt and decaying shrimps will eventually combine into a semi-solid tightly compacted pulp. The pulp is then pressed through a mill and passed out as thread-like paste. The process is then reversed when the paste is repacked into sacks for a second round of fermentation. The fermentation process is repeated once more before full maturity occurs. The final product is chopped into bricks, resembling blocks of butter. The mark of the producer is lightly etched on top of each block with a name press brushed with vegetable oil. Family members then wrap the blocks, first with grease proof paper, followed by a plastic sheet then finally the outer wrap bearing the name of the product and manufacturer.

Belacan is used in countless local dishes; *sambal belacan*, *belacan* fried chicken, *sambal tumis*, fried *cincalu*, satay sauce and rojak. Good quality *belacan* can be obtained from Kampong Batu Marang that is the most famous for this product.

Besides using *belacan* to add flavour to one's cooking, *belacan* can be eaten with a number of vegetables like cucumber, winged bean (*Kacang sirik*), centella asiatica (*Pengaga*) and many more.



Cosmos caudatus (Ranca-ranca)



Centella asiatica (Pengaga)



Winged bean (Kacang sirik)



Belacan is used in countless local dishes.



The process of making belacan.

