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HERITAGE TRAIL OF KAMPUNG RAJA AS THE WOOD CARVING  
ART VILLAGE IN BESUT, TERENGGANU.

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## ABSTRACT

Malaysia has its own valuable heritage that should not be ignored. The heritage that in terms of historical and cultural would bring an exciting discovery and benefits in sustaining the image of a place. This paper addresses the heritage assets where the societies can be delighted by the genius loci of Kampung Raja, Besut, Terengganu as it has the authenticity of both historical and cultural heritage. However, there is not enough emphasis on the exposure of these two heritage to the societies, which contributes to their demise and abandonment. Therefore, this research is intended to preserve and enhance the current heritage remnants and craftsmanship, supported by the local and external communities. With the aid of the establishment of the heritage trail, all of the valuable heritage treasure including the history can be connected to the people of Kampung Raja. The finding of this study is not only considered on how the both of military and cultural heritage will be preserved within its rural landscape, but also the proposal of a heritage trail in Kampung Raja where it will facilitate the village to be a destination of heritage tourism. Through the implementation of the heritage trail design approach and the involvement of locals together with their tradition activities within local settlements, Kampung Raja will be transformed into a significant woodcarving village where it has its own identity and character.

Keywords: heritage trail, historical and cultural heritage, woodcarving village, conservation and preservation, identity and character

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO TOPIC

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In Malaysia, wood carving is one of the oldest traditional decoration arts especially in the Peninsular region which the design qualities during its establishment era are much greater than today's era. Woodcarving has been an important aspect in conserving a part of the Malay cultural heritage in our country. The decoration art of wood carving is considered to be the most significant component in traditional Malay wooden houses which portray the identity of Malay traditional architecture. However, modern architecture becomes one of the reasons for the vanishing of the wood carving on Malay architecture as our country is developing towards the urbanization. Architectural materials and elements used to depict the local features have been neglected, hence, until today, some of our Malay architecture lose their local character. Not only that, but lack of skilled craftsmen also causes the wood carving art to slowly disappear and eventually will go without we even realize. In this modern era, there are problems in applying the carving components to new buildings hence, they try to modernize every building as there is a lack of skilled craftsmen, maintenance problems and additional high prices (Ullah, 2018). As wood carving is considered as an old folk's art, it also becomes less interested in the young generation nowadays. The effort to highlight the beauty of wood carvings in architectural design planning to attract the attention of the younger generation is of no importance.

As in Kelantan and Terengganu, some wood carving decoration arts were regarded as the significant component to the traditional Malay vernacular architecture, especially in Kelantan and Terengganu. This includes the old palaces, mosques, houses and contemporary buildings around the area of earlier settlements. Since the beginning of the Islamic era, woodcarving symbolized the social status of the Sultans and the wealthy people which only them had the privilege to own it (Hussin, Baba, Hassan, & Mohamed, 2012). This can be seen in a few districts in Terengganu which still have the old wooden palatial buildings, mosques and settlements that have the woodcarving embellishments on them. Not only that, the carved components that were embellished on the vernacular buildings in Kelantan and Terengganu show the skills of the traditional master craftsmen which needed to be inherited by today's younger generation in order to be conserved. However, the same issues arise as in Malaysia context that affecting the woodcarving to be no longer popular among the locals of Kelantan and Terengganu. As Kelantan and Terengganu are very slow in development, many locals have been migrated to the Western part of the Peninsular to find jobs which resulting in the less young generation to involve in this cultural heritage. Hence, in order to rebrand the cultural heritage of Kampung Raja, the establishment of heritage trail might be the best solution which not only will help to conserve the heritage site but also in boosting the economy on cultural