

A PROJECT ON PULAU BESAR-MALACCA.

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7, JUNE 1976

FORWARD

The topic that I have chosen for my project, Malaysian culture this semester is the island of Pulau Besar-Malacca. I have undertaken this project for the past four months and visited the site and gathered informations from the residents there.

I would like to thank my lecturer Enchik Al-Rashid Mohd Ibrahim for his advices and checking the text and other invaluable informations. I would also like to thank all the residents of Pulau Besar, Enchik Salleh Mohd Dendi, lecturer of the Mara Junior Science College for his guidance, Enchik Zainal Baba of The Tourist Development Corporation and others who have made this project a success.

SHARIFAH.

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Brief history of Malacca.

Malacca marked by its many cultures.

Malacca has been aptly described as the "city of dreams". Above all other places in Malaysia it can boast of a history that runs back unbroken to the 14th century.

First founded by a Malay noble, Malacca became for a time the greatest city in South East Asia. Legends say that "A cat took the whole year to cover all the tiles". A famous mart it exported gold, ivory, tins, spices and silk.

To it in its early days there came Admiral Cheng Ho the three jewelled eunuch, envoy of the Ming emperor Yang Lo, bearing gifts and the promise of protection, and forging the first Chinese link with Malaysia.

In 1511, Malacca fell to the Portuguese under Alfonso D'Albuquerque. Over a period of 130 years Portugal made it into one of the mightiest fortresses in the orient—ringing it with walls and raising palaces and churches. The Dutch came in 1641 and stormed it after a fierce and bitter siege. They held Malacca for more than a century and a half adding their own style of architecture with such buildings as Christ church and Stadthuys and the Saturday houses of the merchants in Jalan Tun Tan Cheng Lock. In 1824 the Dutch exchanged Malacca for the British settlement of Bencoolen in Sumatra.

All round one in Malacca there is a short story of the centuries. Apart from the evidence of the Portuguese and the Dutch occupations, there is Malaysia's oldest mosque and the first temple built in the peninsula by the Chinese—the pioneer sea furers and merchants who came to trade and stayed to become a distinctive part of many races.

Malacca's quaint medieval character, narrow streets, the old buildings, polyglot population and the marks of its history under many flags will add to your interest.

Pulau Besar-Island of Legends.

Introduction.

The aboriginal language contains the words "Pulau Besar" which means big island. The island of Pulau Besar is situated on the coast of mainland Malacca. It is three miles away from one of the villages in Malacca called Kampong Umbai. The journey to the island is half an hour by boat from the pier of Umbai. The fare for the trip is only M33/- per head to and fro. There are several boats to the island, each of them bearing their own names such as "Aku", "Mawar", "Hang Tuah" and etc. The boats belong to the Bumiputra co-operative society of Umbai Village. Malacca state comprises mainland Malacca and a group of other smaller islands. Beside Pulau Besar there are Pulau Kelapa, Pulau Hanyut, Pulau Endau and Pulau Nangka. From mainland Malacca, you could see the island of Pulau Besar in a shape of a pregnant woman.

Pulau Besar is about four square miles and for visitors who are adventurous could pace the miles of golden sandy beaches. Half of the island is made up of hard granite and this clearly indicates that the island is hilly in nature.

On this island you could find numerous tropical fruit trees namely coconut, mango, jackfruit and etc. The state government has also set up projects such as cattle rearing and fruit growing in the past few years but unfortunately this has not been so successful due to unfavourable conditions and infertile soil.