

The Actual Trip



Not knowing what to expect, eight students and two teachers set off for Brunei Darussalam. Upon our arrival, we were received by the students and staff of Sekolah Tinggi Perempuan Raja Isteri (STPRI). After checking into the Kiulap Plaza Hotel, we changed into suitable attire to go for a walk in the Tasek Lama Recreational Park, in the middle of Bandar Seri Begawan.

Brunei, indeed, deserves the title of "The Kingdom of Unexpected Treasure" as after only 5 minutes of walking, the park offered a majestic natural waterfall. It was an opportunity to bond with the STPRI students and teachers whom we would be with for the next 4 to 5 days.



In the morning, we headed to STPRI to join the year 7 and 8 students for their morning assembly. After they sang their school song and national anthem, we found out that during each assembly, a different class would stage a performance of their choice. We watched one class do a very interesting play. After the assembly, we went on a tour of the school and then we joined the students in their classrooms. The first lesson was MIB: Melayu Islam Beraja where we learnt about the current Sultan of Brunei Darussalam and the events that the people in Brunei celebrate in their country.



After that, our buddies brought us to a class where a Malay lesson was being conducted. In the lesson, we were taught the different proverbs used in Brunei. In Singapore or Malaysia, we would call proverbs 'peribahasa' but in Brunei, they call it Perambahan Brunei. Next, we went to a History class where we learnt about Brunei's background and how Brunei became a developed country.



After we left the school, we changed into our casual wear and headed to a centre called 'Pusat Penternakan Dan Pemeliharaan Penyu' which is a conservation centre for the turtles that are found around the coasts of Borneo. We were told of how important turtles are to the ocean and people. The government is taking turtle conservation very seriously mostly because the turtles are becoming endangered. After a short presentation, we took a closer look at the adorable turtles. Everyone was excited and cradled the turtles.



After visiting all the CCA's and learning more about Brunei's culture, the school planned a really fun outdoor activity for us. We were to play netball with the school netball team! The game was really exciting. The school players were very nice and even gave us tips during the match.



Soon it was our second last day in Brunei. Time had passed extremely fast in the four days that we were there. After breakfast, we set off for STPRI. We were delighted to see our buddies once again. They got onto the bus and our long journey to the Tasik Marimbun Heritage Park begun. During the Heritage trail, we saw many different types of floras and faunas. It was a very different experience from what many of us were used to.

At the end of the trail, we eventually reached the Tasik (Lake) Marimbun which was absolutely gorgeous! It was so peaceful and calm. We had to walk across a relatively long bridge so that we could see the lake better. This trip taught us that, whenever we have the opportunity to travel we should always take that opportunity because the lessons learnt are absolutely amazing.



After that, we departed for Pantai (beach) Seri Kenangan. Although we did not go near the water, it was still a very nice place to rest and relax. The waves were crashing onto the shore and the seabreeze was refreshingly cool. There was a playground at the place where we stopped to eat. All of a sudden, everyone's innerchild was released! Everyone was having a great time even the teachers!



Finally it was time for the emotional farewell dinner. We were happy with what we had gained from this wonderful experience and also sad that the whole programme was coming to an end. The four days had just flown by. We each made our respective speeches and exchanged gifts. Both schools also performed special items prepared just for this event!



We woke up to the last day of our stay in Brunei. By 7 a.m. we were ready to leave for Tama Kianggeh, an open market with many little stalls selling either fruits, vegetables or souvenirs.





After going around the market, we headed for the Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin mosque located at Bandar Seri Begawan. Its magnificent architecture of the mosque really blew us away. We snapped a few pictures before walking to Kampong Ayer where we were privileged enough to visit the home of one of the STPRI teachers. The house was long and unlike anything we had seen before. We were served with local delights, namely, the 'ambuyat'. Then we headed to Royal Regalia, a museum which displays the different gifts given to the Sultan of Brunei from other countries. There were also pictures of the Sultan and his family when he was younger. We gained a better understanding of how countries are ruled by royalty.



Although it was only a five day trip we enjoyed every single second of it and we really appreciated the Bruneians warm hospitality. We learnt a lot of new things and will use that knowledge to do something better for society.



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