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What's it like to live in Kajang these days?

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What's it like to live in Kajang these days?

EMERGENCY BACKGROUND

A KAJANGITE GIVES A REASSURING ANSWER

At a recent party in Kuala Lumpur I was introduced as a "Kajangite". Believe it or not, people kept away from me after the introduction.

A few bold ones came up to me after a while and surprised me with questions like, "Have you seen the terrorists?", "Do you know any of them?", "Are they really as bad as they are supposed to be?", "How do they walk about in Kajang? Armed?"

Oh! so many question. And I realised how ignorant people are of things here.

So I decided to invite a few of them to visit me. "No," they said. "We are not armed. We have no escorts," etc.

Pondering over some of the things I had been asked and told, I decided to enlighten my friends. Briefly, this is what I feel about the

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The Straits Times / Article , Illustration

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30 August 1953 - JUNGLE GREEN CHAPTER TWO of a great story about the Emergency m Mn East wwk 's chapter tve introduced #o a smalt group of British soldiers recent arrivals to the hajany area of Selangor. Terrorist activity is reported in Kroya. A Chinese family has been brutally murdered in a squatter...

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ORDEAL IN THE JUNGLE

27 September 1953 - ORDEAL IN THE JUNGLE
Another exciting extract from Jungle Green 9 ;<< SENT for Tilley, Johnny and Mike and gave them their orders. I told Johnny to provide Sergeant Robins with ten men to come with me on the following day to ambush the timber kongsi. The rest of the...

The Straits Times / Article , Illustration

SUNGEI SIPUT town under suspicion...

3 November 1971 - SUNGEI SIPUT town under suspicion... Gerard Corr By THE black, merry eyes twinkle and the face worn shiny smooth in seven decades creases into familiar folds as it enjoys again the favourite, much- repeated coffee shop joke. "Of course, everyone in Malaysia thinks we are all communists in Sungei Siput....

The Straits Times / Article , Illustration

A PARAGRAPH AND A PATROL

17 July 1949 - by SGT. R. TABER, A Military Observer u COMBINED military and police party operating in the Sungei Patani area yesterday captured a bandit living in a hut some distance from the main road. The man was unarmed, but several important Communist papers were discovered" That

the whole thing.

No doubt, Kajang has earned a bad reputation as a "hot-bed" of Communist activity, one cannot deny that Kajang has become one of the notorious towns of Malaya



The Kajang Gang is undoubtedly led by a young, misguided man who was nurtured and educated in the township of Kajang itself. What special circumstances warped his mind nobody seems to know.

Among them probably is another man who received secondary education at Kajang.

He was a member of the Anti-Japanese Army and after it was disbanded he joined the town's only English School and studied for two years.

He failed his School Leaving Certificate examination after the war and was unsettled in his mind as to a career. He disappeared from the district when the Government detained all suspects after the Gua Musang surprise

He was then considered a normal, considerate, kind and helpful schoolboy. He was good in all games and quite popular with all boys.

Why then did he disappear? What is he doing? Nobody seems to know.

It was probably his old association with the "three star" men in the area, and also his inability to earn a comfortable living, that lured him to the jungle if indeed he is there.

Most of the others in the

Kajang Gang are presumably squatters from Sungai Jelok and Sungai Kantan areas and the tappers from the rubber area.

The proof of this assumption is that there were hardly any able-bodied males at the time of evacuation of the area. A good many rubber tappers on estates in the district are women, and mainly Chinese.



The misguided men were promised a Utopia where each of them would be a "king." They were misled into believing that the career of a bandit is patriotic and glorious and would bring the Soviet paradise to Malaya.

The constant bombing of their hide-outs, the sharp look-out of the Army and the police force and the death and arrest of many of their comrades must have cooled their ardour for wanton destruction and taught them a bitter lesson; but there is no retreat for those who are

papers were discovered. That...

The Straits Times / Article

Hot Springs at Dusun Tua

20 July 1950 - A FEW miles from the village of Ulu I. auyat. near Kajang in fi<'hingor, are the hot springs of Dusun Tua '(old orchard). Dusun Tua. on the way to Kajang. is about 12 miles from Kuala Lumpur, and in thermal region. It is a tml village,...

The Straits Times / Article , Illustration

Mawai—a new deal for squatters

4 December 1949 - Mawai— a new deal for squatters KATHLEEN HICKLEY by- A SHORT time ago, when the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. David ReesWilliams, was visiting Malaya, he said that the bandits were as much a problem for the civil administration as for the troops and police. He meant, of...

The Straits Times / Article , Illustration

INVADED- BY ANTS

4 October 1953 - HAZARDS OF JIXGLE WARFARE IX MALAYA "I sa« an army of iheni aclvam-iiii; across the ground in a solid column three feet wide Another thrilling extract from the book everyone is talking about— "Jungle* Green 9 by Major Arthur Campbell of the Suffolks. The author and his...

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reveal for those who are guilty of murder and those who are closely watched by their comrades.

They are caught between the horns of a dilemma. After having killed nearly a hundred persons and caused the loss of several tens of thousands of dollars of property they presumably consider that they cannot expect anything but utter annihilation.

Life is sweet even to a bandit who has lost all the finer feelings of a civilised man. He has become a symbol of anarchy and brutality but when he is caught he expects just treatment, mercy and pardon from the very Government whose destruction has been his avowed object.



If one looks at a map of Kajang one will find that there is little vacant space in the whole district of Ulu Langat.

Only the roads and railways cut the cultivated areas. All round Kajang are rubber estates, some of them large ones.

It is no easy matter to guard these estates, as it is possible to enter them or infiltrate into them from all directions. It is most difficult to check a bandit or a part-time bandit with an identity card.

The bandits living in the jungle nearby may have their collectors among the estate workers. If so, a monthly collection from tappers and estate staff would be no great difficulty.

The well-managed and better-protected estates are usually left alone. It is the smaller ones that can be coerced into paying occasional tributes.

The presence of the bandits and their activity is sure proof that they have been successful to some extent in their intimidation of persons whom they have known well for several years.



Bombs and shells keep them on the run constantly but camp sites are nevertheless chosen, sometimes very close to the road. Their presence is another sure sign that clandestine assistance in food is given by the workers in the neighbourhood, who may be part-time bandits and part-time tappers.

The country round Kajang is rather hilly; the average level is anything between 100 and 600 feet above the sea. Visibility from the air is poor and it is difficult for anybody to discover a hiding place in the belukar. Unless information is available.

indeed, location of a bandit camp in the jungle is usually impossible, as the sites are normally cunningly chosen.

★
One of the important hiding places is the Ayer Itam Forest Reserve, that lies between Serdang and Puchong. This piece of jungle, in the middle of some important rubber estates and tin mines, is a favourite haunt of the bandits.

It is about sixteen square miles in area and many hills in it rise to a height of over 500 feet. There are permanent tracks and footpaths in it, particularly in the south.

It is not difficult for the tapper and miner-bandits to intimidate workers in several parts nearby.

The jungle nearest to Kajang town is the Sungai Jelok Forest Reserve.

The Sungai Jelok is a little stream that joins the Langat River near the Kajang railway station. It is about ten miles long and flows through

the jungle, which is about three miles away.

This piece of jungle is only about a square mile in area. It is the favourite haunt of the ex-squatter bandits of Sungai Kantan and Sungai Jelok.

They broke the water-mains leading to the town last August and their vandalism aroused the anger and indignation of the 12,000 citizens who depend on the water supply.

★
A stream within the town area still supplies water; it is of inferior quality as it is full of silt on rainy days. The efficiency of the Public Works Department Engineer and his staff was put to the test and within a week they were able to restore the normal supply.

The Sungai Jelok jungle is a bad area, and camps have been destroyed there over and over again. The residents of Kajang can see the planes dive and drop bombs on their targets. But despite constant bombing and mortaring the bandits return to their familiar hide-outs from the vast jungle that stretches between the Langat and Semenyih Rivers.

These are co-extensive with the virgin forests that stretch beyond the State of Selangor into Negri Sembilan and Pahang across the Main Range.

The reason for these bandits' persistent return to the same area is the fact that most of them used to be squatters living around Kajang.

In the earlier days, they returned home after dark to get food and other necessities from their families and friends. Some were part-time gardeners and part-time bandits.

After the burning and destruction of the huts and the evacuation of the elderly people and children, who were the only persons found in the cultivated areas, the

bandits found it rather risky to approach the town.

Their organisation for intimidation and the getting of food supplies has apparently not been completely broken, but the vigilance of the Army and the police, and the control of the movement of food supplies, have made it harder than ever for the bandits to come within a few miles of the town without being detected.



Malayans outside Kajang believe that the people of this town are living in a veritable hell. When they pass through the district during the day, or at night, they do so nervously. The numerous accidents which have taken place, as a rule far outside the main town, have given the impression that an armed bandit lurks behind every tree and bend.

Does the emergency affect the 35,000 people of Ulu Langat District much more than those of any other areas? Do the people go about their work trembling?

I should say no, not all—

thanks to the security forces stationed in Kajang, without whom it would be intolerable.

The curfew affects the business of the petty trader and the food seller; it affects the recreation of the office and shop workers who have little time for sport or recreation.

But in a way the curfew is a blessing. People mind their business behind closed doors, children return from their play by half-past six, or at the latest a few minutes before seven, and have ample time to study.

Husbands are forced to stay at home and the housewives are doubly happy—they need not keep awake late at night for the return of their husbands from clubs, cinemas or parties; and money once spent in luxury and entertainment is now available for the more necessary things of life. So the homes are quite happy.

Parents have more time to pay attention to their children. The old rule, "Early to bed and early rise makes a man healthy and wealthy

and wise," is followed by most people in Kajang.

A few people who can afford the luxury of going to Kuala Lumpur for entertainment or shopping do so on Saturdays and Sundays and return before the curfew hour.

The only people who go about Kajang trembling are the nightbirds—and, of course, the bandits. The rest of the people in Kajang sleep in peace, having full confidence in the guardians of the law.

Early in the morning everybody gets busy.

Some prepare a hurried meal and wait for the clock to show 6.30, when the curfew is over and life begins again. These are the rubber tappers, the P.W.D. and Sanitary Board workers, newspaper boys and bread vendors.

Everybody is in a hurry.

particularly the rubber tappers, who normally earn more by going to work in the early hours of the morning to collect the maximum amount of latex.

Whatever Malaysians outside Kajang think of them, the people of Kajang are cheerful. Neither the roar of a base, nor the mortar bombing at odd hours of the night interferes with the daily routine work and rest.

As a matter of fact, the noise of a jeep at midnight or in the early hours of the morning, or the sound of footsteps from a police patrol gives the citizens complete confidence in the security forces.

When any incidents occur, the people of Kajang, like any others in the remotest part of Malaya, ask, "What, when, where?" They go about their work unconcernedly.

This is not complacency; it is confidence in the Government and in law and authority.





Beaching a Perahu Payang at Perupok, Kelantan.—Photo by C. A. Gibson Hill.

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