



NYARU MENTENG REHABILITATION CENTER

QUICK FACTS:

FOUNDED in 1999 by Lone Dröscher Nielsen

LOCATED in Central Kalimantan (Indonesian region of Borneo), about 28 km (17.5 mi) from Palangka Raya

STAFF of about 170 including babysitters, assistants, people working in the medical department, guards and other workers

ORANGUTANS: nearly 650; most of them orphans

THE LOCATION: The position of the center was chosen with great care by Lone Dröscher Nielsen and BOS. It was important to find a place in the central part of Kalimantan, where many of the captured orangutans originally come from. It had to be a place not too far from a bigger city, but at the same time a place with enough undisturbed forest for the orphaned orangutans. This was not exactly an easy task in an area where the city and the forest are two things rarely found close to one another. Nyaru Menteng turned out to be just the place. 2-3 km (1-2 mi) of gravel road leads up to the main road going to Palangka Raya, the capital of Central Kalimantan. A city with good road connections and an airport; something which makes shopping for both every-day things and more special goods a whole lot easier.

THE CENTER: The center consists of a main building, a veterinarian room, quarantine cages and other facilities. Surrounding the building are 40 bigger quarantine cages and 2 big cages used for the socialization process. The forest around the center serves as the perfect place when the young orangutans are taught how to survive in the wild. Five small islands in the river nearby are used as the first home for the orangutans as they begin their new lives without their caretakers. The center also has its own fruit-plantation and a big nature reserve, which the orangutans can be released into once they are ready for a life in freedom.

THE GROUNDS: The center lies in a forest area, which for a while has been functioning as a wild, botanic garden. It has been under the responsibility of the rainforest authorities, and can therefore display a rich diversity in both plants and wildlife. The forest is a frequently used recreational area by the students at the university in Palangka Raya, and on the weekends, people also come from the city to walk in the forest. It is not possible for the visitors to get in too close contact with the orangutans at the center. The orangutans are trained to become wild and it is therefore imperative that they have as little contact with human beings as possible.

THE WORKERS' VILLAGE: All the employees are, if possible, hired from the areas closest to the center. But as more and more people are needed, it has become necessary to hire people from areas further away. So right next to the main entrance of the center, a small village has been build, which has a common-house that all employees can use freely.

THE ISLANDS: Kaja, Palas I. and II., Hampapak Matei and Bangamat are all islands in the Rongan River, which runs behind the clinic in Nyaru Menteng. From there, there is a mere 8 km (5 mi) drive to the small town of Sei Gohong, which is the most important harbor in the area. There are only primitive feeding-platforms and jetties on the islands.

THE INFORMATION CENTER: Education and information are important tools in the fight against illegal cutting of forest and killings of orangutans. Therefore local schools are invited to visit the center, and information campaigns about alternatives to the cutting are send out all over Borneo. On Sundays the information center is open to everyone.

THE FRUIT PLANTATION: Nyaru Menteng has its very own fruit plantation called: "Nyaru Menteng Lestari" (Lestari means: "Sustainable"). It is a piece of land of 3 ha (about 7.5 acres), which is planted with many different fruit bearing trees, such as: mango, pineapple and rambutan. Soon the plantation will be the primary supplier of fruit to the orangutans living in Nyaru Menteng.

