

Cruising on Tasik Banding

Name : *Puan Noraini Abdullah*
PI1M : *Pekan Gerik, Daerah Hulu Perak, Negeri Perak*
Service Provider : *Telekom Malaysia Berhad*

Not long ago, the word “cruising” was synonymous with partying, romance or exploring far-flung destinations. In so doing, often we fail to discover the gems available in our backyard. One such treasure lies in the northern part of Perak, within the 130 million-year-old Belum-Temengor rainforest complex known as Tasik Banding.

Here, Puan Noraini Abdullah runs a double-decker floating hotel with living quarters, kitchen and two bathrooms. The 25-passenger capacity houseboat is a legacy of Puan Noraini’s late husband who was a chef by trade. In 2002, he decided to invest his savings into buying a second-hand pontoon from a logging company at Tasik Banding and turned it into a floating chalet. The floating chalet is towed by a boat that would bring the guest around Tasik Banding. Five years later, he bought the houseboat, named Toman, to expand the company’s repertoire of offerings.

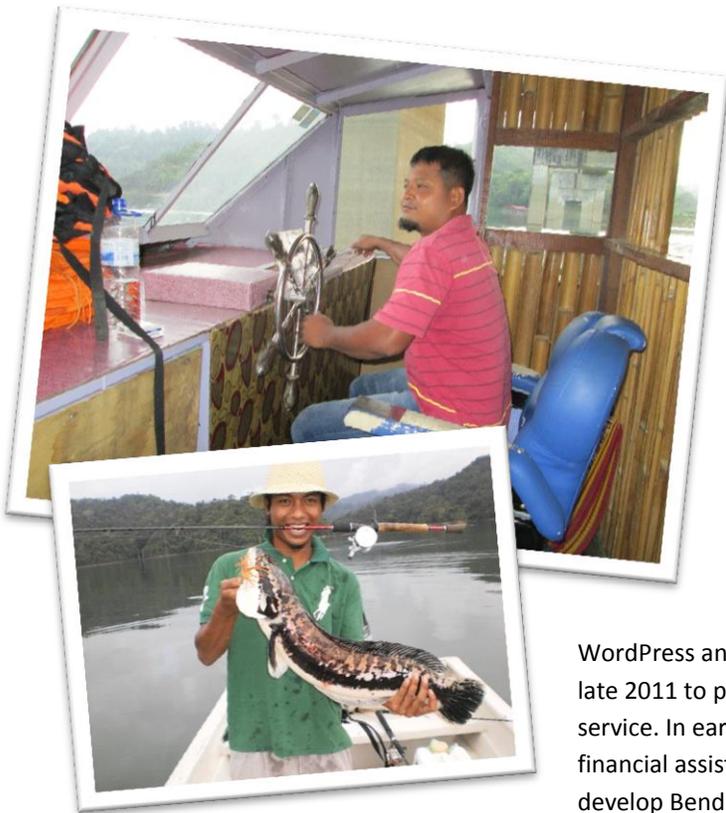
Today, Bendong Maju Enterprise offers several recreational activities for guests such as fishing, jungle trekking and canoeing around the Royal Belum State Park. For day-to-day running of her business, Puan Noraini depends on her



The Toman - Houseboat owned by Bendong Maju Enterprise

two sons, her brother in-law and three hired-hands. Since prior arrangement with the park officials is necessary before exploring Royal Belum Island, Puan Noraini will obtain the necessary approvals for guests. On the island, visitors could enjoy being close to nature and explore the flora and fauna. The forest reserve is known to have the world’s largest flower, the beautiful Rafflesia, while the island is ideal for nature lovers and photographers.

Puan Noraini lives with her seven children in her home at Tanjung Kala, which is about 45 kilometres from Tasik Banding. She first heard of the PI1M when her children chatted about it at home. Upon learning that the Centre welcomes adult visitors, she decided to find out more even though at first she was shy about mixing around with youngsters at the Centre. To her surprise, she discovered that there were basic classes for adults on computers and training on social media and web designing. With encouragement from



between RM500 and RM1,000 a month. The earnings is now six times as much, about RM6,000 a month. Puan Noraini credits this to facilities at the PI1M in Gerik, where she was able to create her blog site on

Already, through word of mouth, she has guests coming from as far as Taiwan, France, Japan, China and Indonesia. When asked about the hospitality packages on offer, Puan Noraini said it all depends on the guest's timetable. She shared that at the end of September 2013, she will be hosting some fishing enthusiasts from Indonesia and this group plans to stay on her houseboat for an 8-day angling expedition.

WordPress and Facebook page in late 2011 to promote her houseboat service. In early 2013, she received financial assistance of RM1,000 to develop Bendong Maju Enterprise's own website from the Commission's Get Malaysian Business Online or GMBO initiative.

Puan Noraini said she is thankful that the PI1M is located near her home at Tanjung Kala, Perak. Having experienced first-hand the benefits of the Centre, she encourages people in her community to take the opportunity to frequent the Centre and learn to use the Internet. Realising the importance of being connected to the Internet, she has subscribed to a broadband service at home as she feels it is beneficial for her entire family.

the helpful staff at the PI1M in Gerik, manager Encik Khaizan Izatzi Nazri, 31, and his assistant Puan Norsyamila Zainol, 26, Puan Noraini began attending courses on how to use a computer and later learned to harness the power of social media as a marketing tool.

Currently, her website is in Bahasa Malaysia only and Puan Noraini has plans to make her site multilingual for the convenience of her foreign guests.

Before discovering the PI1M, Bendong Maju Enterprise was generating

<http://www.bendongmaju.com.my/>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Bendong-Enterprise-Tasik-Temengor/238880152829505>

<http://bendongenterprise.wordpress.com/>



Facebook page created at the 1Malaysia Internet Centre and used as a marketing tool by Puan Noraini to introduce her houseboat package to the public