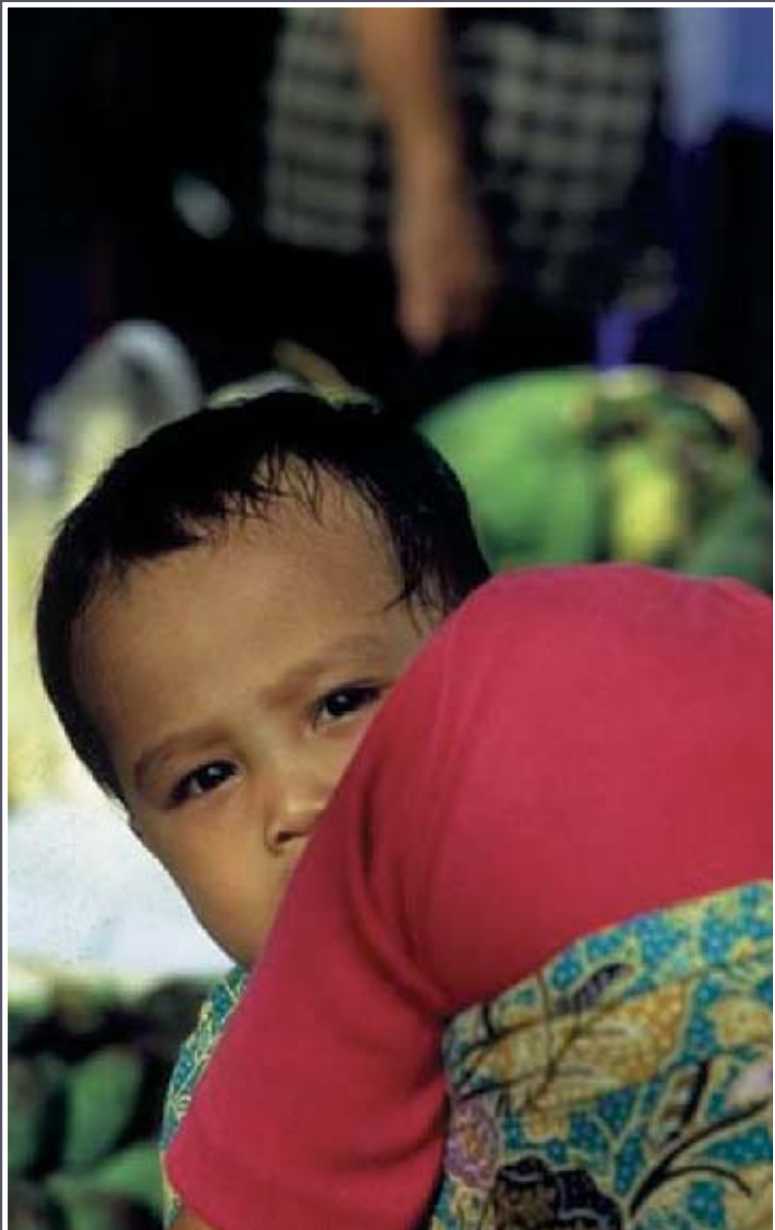


DO YOU KNOW

By ANNA VIVIENNE

WHERE TO STAY



In the Kadazandusun's community there are several traditions that are adhered to strictly. This is especially true in homes that still follow their time-honoured custom.

In the most Kadazandusun community, it is always a joy to welcome a baby into the world. So when a girl get pregnant, all the elderly folks, especially the ladies will begin to give advises.

The initial taboo will be for the pregnant girl, never to sit at the door. When she sits at the door, she is neither inside the house nor outside; and this is not good. It is believed that she will have difficulties when she gives birth because the baby will follow what she did; neither in nor out. The baby's entrance into the world will be painfully slow; usually assisted by the midwife.

A pregnant girl should never step over the rope used to tie buffaloes. This is a no-no. It is said that if she has stepped over a 'buffalo rope' the baby's umbilical code will be entwined on the baby's body just like it being wounded up on the buffalo's horns. This can cause complications, especially in the olden days when there were no trained nurse and the bobohizan or shaman double up as a midwife.

She should never laugh at or mock anything funny or ugly. For instance, if she laughs at a rheumy eyed old beggar, her child will be born with just like the old beggar. If she laughs at a monkey, her baby may take on the characteristic of that simian.

It is also advised that her husband does not shot at or maim any animals during the tenure of the wife's pregnancy. There are real stories where the husband slaughtered an animal and the baby was born with a huge red birthmark on the throat.

So these norms are always adhered to by both the expecting mother and the father, until such time when the baby is born.

It does not end there however.

When the baby is born, he is not allowed out of the house until he is a month old and that is not even encouraged. Unless it is absolutely imperative for him to go outside the house, he stays in.

He is encouraged to stay in the house because a baby's smell is fresh and 'sweet' and believed to attract bad spirits that acts like a 'vampire', sucking the life out of the baby, making him sick or killing him.

When the time comes for the baby to be allowed out of the house, an elder will carry out a minor ritual where she will go down the house first and inform the 'unseen neighbours' and 'passers by' that there is a new addition in the family and hope that he will not be considered an intruder or a stranger and be mistreated. And then the baby is allowed out of the house, but only if it is absolutely necessary.

As the baby is growing, there is more taboo to observe. Never say the baby is fat or pretty. This can attract bad spirits. It is believed that they too will appreciate the baby's comeliness and will want to take the baby. Of course they cannot take the physical side of the baby but they will take his 'essence' and that too can make the baby sick or kill it. So never praise the baby.

If the baby starts to look really like the father, it is recommended that the growing child be given a stud on one ear. This is believed to differentiate between the two. If this is ignored, it is believed that the child will have a 'short' life.

These are some interesting norms practised in most of the Kadazandusun's community. It must be stressed that there are about 40 ethnic groups in this community and these norms may vary from one group to the others.

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Fax: 6 088 522999 / 442300
Email: www.imperialkk.com

Kadazandusun Community:

Do's and don'ts

Weekly TAMU (Open Market) in Sabah

■ Tamus are held in almost every town/district in Sabah. Most local traders gather to buy, sell or barter their farm produce, handicrafts, traditional ware, musical instruments, etc.

SUNDAY 6am - 2pm
Kota Belud, Tuaran, Putatan, Papar, Babagon, Tambunan, Tenom, Membakut, Kota Marudu, Sikuati, Gaya Street Fair (Kota Kinabalu)

MONDAY 6am - 2pm
Tandek

TUESDAY 6am - 2pm
Kiulu

WEDNESDAY 6am - 2pm
Pinggan-pinggan, Tamparuli & Kudat

THURSDAY 6am - 2pm
Donggongan, Telipok, Tenghilan, Pekan Nabal, Sipitang, Tambunan, Keningau

FRIDAY 6am - 2pm
Donggongan, Sunsuron, Weston, Mesapol, Kanibangan

SATURDAY 6am - 2pm
Kinarut, Beaufort, Sindumin, Matunggong, Pekan Pitas

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