

By Anna Vivienne



**K**UNDASANG is located along the bank of Kundasang Valley some six kilometers from Kinabalu National Park and about two hours drive from Kota Kunabalu. It is renowned for its vegetable farms and market and for being the closet village to the broody mountain. It is populated by Dusuns who sell highland vegetables in a long row of wooden stalls. There are also stalls that cater mostly to bulk buyers from all over Sabah and Sarawak.

Since the stalls and the shop houses there are built near the Kota Kinabalu-Sandakan Road, it is understandably very crowded especially in the morning when bulk buyers and their vehicles park back to nose very closely near the stalls. Long distance commuters in their buses and vans also pass

by frequently. So anybody standing by the road has to be lithe and jump back every time a gigantic vehicle flash by.

Recently, the Cabbage Festival was held at Kundasang to commemorate the people's source of livelihood; vegetables.

Everything went well, the participants in the exhibitions and aspiring singers turned up for the singing contest. Entertainers and farmers turned up.

However it rained for the whole time; it rained in the night, in the morning, through the day and to the next day. The whole area near the shops was in an inch

of water; the exhibition participants were wet and not too happy.

One exhibition participants stated that the exhibition area was too small and the main event was held elsewhere, so very few browsers came to their stalls.

Another complained that the rain was bad enough but to be secluded in a small exhibition area was the 'pits'.

"A special place for exhibitions should be identified so that we participants will not come away with nothing but disappointment," the participant who wishes not to be identified said.

Another agreed saying that a bigger exhibition area should be identified and all participants moved there in future.

"The main event, like the singing contest should be held on a stage nearby the exhibition stalls," he stressed.

They all agreed that even though they came solely to participate in the exhibition, they also wished to sell their wares. As their stalls were set away from the main event, very few people came their way.

Next year, however, exhibition participants may soon enjoy a better site.

Suatin Mayor the organizing secretary of the Cabbage Festival says that soon the open space there will be bigger.

According to him, a road development exercise is being carried out there presently and this road will pass directly by the shop houses, which is built at the slope near the War Memorial.

"As the hill side will be leveled right down to the shop houses' point, the space created by the leveling will be utilized as a field where activities can be held," he says, adding that this included festivals like the Cabbage Fest recently.

He also stresses that he was aware about the space constraint during the recent festival.

"We cannot do much about that because the township is rather small and the spaces available are not really huge but we did what we could. I believe we did well despite these shortcomings," he says.

He adds that with the new development next year, everybody's needs' will be met. We hope so too.

Don't wait until next year to visit Kundasang though. This place is always a pleasant place to visit. While you are there visit the War Memorial, take a drive up to Mesilau and chill out at the Kinabalu Parks.



# Of Kundasang, Cabbages and Space