UTAR NEW VILLAGE COMMUNITY PROJECT
REPORT

NAME OF NEW VILLAGE:
KAMUNTING 甘文丁
PERAK

Project carried out by:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>ID Number</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Year/Semester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Tan Keat Li</td>
<td>0802556</td>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>Y3S3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Catherine Tan Yee Wen</td>
<td>1100213</td>
<td>Banking and Finance</td>
<td>Y2S2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ng Soo Yen</td>
<td>0901538</td>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>Y3S3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Wee Kim Ying</td>
<td>1102084</td>
<td>Foundation In Arts</td>
<td>Y1S3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**ABSTRACT**

Kamunting is the biggest satellite town in Taiping’s Larut, Matang and Selama district, Perak, Malaysia. It is also the biggest industrial town in Taiping and is famous mainly for being home to the Kamunting Detention Center, a prison camp for detainees.

During the Malayan Emergency between 1948 and 1960, Kamunting was the site of a major Commonwealth military base, there being a large garrison for the 28th Commonwealth Independent Infantry Brigade and also one of the three British Military Hospitals (BMHs) in Malaya. Between Taiping and Kamunting is one of the main Military Cemeteries in Malaya. Over the many years of the conflict against the Communist terrorists, thousands of British, Australian, New Zealand, Fijian and Gurkha troops lived - and died - in and around Kamunting and Taiping.

Kampung Baru Kamunting houses the main bus station for Taiping town. Soon the Taiping Train station will relocate there too. The village has a weekly night market every Saturday night near the bus station that sells all sorts of local fresh produce and food stuff. There are also fruit sellers along the road leading to the Kamunting bus stops which sell seasonal fruits like durian and mangosteens. It also connects Taiping to the North-South Expressway via the northern exit.

Major tourist spots are the masjid Al-Jabbar, the Kuil Maha Mariamman Temple and the Sam Wang Yah Temple. These places of worship reflect the diversity of cultures and religions in Kg. Baru Kamunting. Plans for a Taiping Sports Centre, which includes a 15000 seater stadium, indoor venues and extreme sports site, are still under consideration.
HISTORY

Kampung Baru Kamunting was founded over 80 years ago. According Mr. Tan, the village headman, it is the smallest new village among all the new villages in Malaysia. During the last 10 to 15 years, the government has given subsidies for local infrastructure.

The houses in Kampung Baru Kamunting are mostly made of wood and scattered around the village randomly. The common modes of transport are motorcycles and cars. The nearest town is Taiping which is 5km away from the village. The local authority is Majlis Perbandaran Taiping.

Today the population of the village is about 3,000. Many youth from Kampung Baru Kamunting have left for better job opportunities elsewhere. Now most of the residents are young children and older folks or the “evergreens”.
POPULATION

Generally, Kampung Baru Kamunting has over 300 houses. The majority of residents are Chinese, followed by Indians and Malays. The village has an aging population with 71% aged 65 years and above.
ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

The majority of Kampung Baru Kamunting residents own small businesses like coffee hawker stalls and shops, grocery stalls. Currently there are only 2 grocery shops in the village. Some villagers work as construction workers.
SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

SAM WONG YAH TEMPLE

Mr. Tan, the village headman, and the project team. This picture was taken in front of the Sam Wong Yah Temple

The Sam Wong Yah Temple was built in 1882. It is a Chinese temple where villagers worship the deities and pay respect to their ancestors. Every first and fifteenth day of the Chinese Lunar Month, villagers throng to the temple. This temple is also a place for villagers to meet and socialize.
KUIL SRI MAHA MARIAMMAN KAMUNTING

This Hindu temple is over 100 years old. During Hindu Festivals, Hindus worship at the temple and they are joined by many Buddhists and Taoists.

MAJLIS AL-JABBAR KAMUNTING

This is the biggest Mosque in Kamunting.
KAMUNTING GOSPEL CENTRE

Kamunting Gospel Centre is a place where most Christians gather to worship. The Church conducts prayers and worship every week. Bible sharing and youth cell groups will be conducted every weekend.
INFRASTRUCTURE

POLIKLINIK

Government clinic in the village. Patients who are seriously ill are treated at the nearest hospital.

COMMUNITY HALL

Dewan Orang Ramai is where the village board meeting is held every 3 months. Additional meetings are held to handle pressing issues. This is where the villagers can bring up complaints and express their views and concerns.
DEWAN KAMUNTING

Dewan Kamunting was built about 1 or 2 years ago. It is used for big functions and activities around the village.

PASAR PAGI KAMUNTING

This is the “pasar” or the morning market where most villagers buy fresh food.
FRUIT STALLS

BUS STATION

This is the biggest and main bus express terminal in Kamunting and also in Taiping.
EDUCATION

Villagers have access to 3 government primary schools and 2 secondary schools which are located in Kamunting, Taiping. Many parents need to spend considerable time and effort transporting their children to and from schools. There is also a private kindergarten and one Chinese primary school near the village.

SJK (C) PHUI CHOI, KAMUNTING

SJK (C) Phui Choi, Kamunting was established in 1927, currently, it has approximately 380 students 20 teachers. Most of the students are Chinese speaking. The distance between the village and the school is approximately 1.5 km.
SMK KAMUNTING

SMK Kamunting has around 650 students and 40 teachers. This school is located at Kg. Expo which is close to Kg. Baru Kamunting. The distance from the village to the school are around 3 km. Privately Run school buses providing transport for many students. This school has a 3 storey building complete with science labs, computer labs, a basketball court, a school field, a school garden and car parks.
PROBLEMS

There are only 2 grocery stores in the village. Unfortunately, both stores carry a limited range of groceries such as canned food, oil, salt and sugar to cater to the basic needs of Kg Baru Kamunting’s small population. There is a trigger grocery shop which is 10 to 15 minute’s drive from the village. The nearest supermarket is a 30 minute drive away.

Besides the limited number of retail outlets in the village, there is an absence of restaurants, hair salons and markets. This means that villagers have to travel outside the village for fresh items, etc.

A major problem is the lack of public transport. Villagers have to walk about 15 to 20 minutes from the village to reach the nearest bus stand. There is no taxi service in the village.

The nearest restaurant outside the village. This restaurant is a 5 minute drive from the village.
One of the few grocery shops in the village.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the limited number of retail outlets and facilities in this small village together with the lack of public transport, it is recommended that a bus stop be located within Kg Baru Kamunting. Perhaps a taxi stand should also be set up, provided the volume of business warrants it.
TOURISM VALUES

The places of worship at Kg. Baru Kamunting have both historical and tourism value. The Sam Wong Yah temple, for example, was built in 1882. Mr. Loke Yew, the philanthropist, stayed at this temple during World War II. It is believed that a big tortoise at the temple helped him succeed in his business. Worshippers may wash their faces at a well in this temple for good luck and good fortune.

Kuil Sri Maha Maramman Kamuntingis a Hindu temple with over 100 years’ history. During Thaipusam, the temple is crowded with Indians as well as Chinese worshippers. Thaipusam festival commemorates the occasion when Parvati gave Murugan a spear so he could vanquish the evil demon Soorapadam. Kavadi Attam is a dance performed by the devotees during the ceremonial worship of Murugan, the Tamil God of War. It is often performed during the festival of Thaipusam. The Kavadi (Thaipusam) itself is a physical burden carried by devotees during Thaipuisam to seek divine intervention from the god Murugan.

Another local place of worship which has great tourism value is the Wild Boar Temple, the Om Sakthi Sri Jada Muneesvarar Alayam. When we arrived at the temple, we didn’t expect to see so many wild boars roaming around. The wild boars in the forest only come to the open when it is feeding time. They roam around freely among humans. There are many cute little wild piglets running swiftly around several fully grown boars. The young ones are still quite shy and won’t let one get close to them unless visitors tempt them with food.

In conclusion, the authorities could promote the places of worship in and around Kg. Baru Kamunting as tourist attractions.
The famous well for good luck and prosperity at Sam Wang Yah Temple

The founder of the Sam Wang Yah temple
KAMUNTING

The Hindu temple, Kuil Maha Mariamman Kamunting

Young boars at the Kamunting Wild Boar Temple
Quite an eye opening experience. It strange and funny that a small temple beside a jungle can get so famous because of the “lucky” wild boars.
**ENTERPRENEURIAL OPPORTUNITIES**

If Kg Baru Kamunting’s tourism value is successfully published, this could provide many opportunities for entrepreneurs. Shops could be set up for local tours, sale of souvenirs, etc. This may spur the establishment of restaurants and other outlets which could also benefit local residents.

*This house is one of the many houses which have been abandoned for years*

*Vacant land in the village*
DISCLAIMER:

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Should there be any queries regarding contents of the report, please contact:

Department of Soft Skills Competency  
Tel: 03-78582628 ext 8274/8656/8269 (Klang Valley Campus)  
05-4688888 ext 2297/2299/2300 (Perak Campus)