

REACHING AN UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUP:



**THE JEHAI OF THE
TEMENGGOR FOREST**

PAUL C.Y.CHEN

**REACHING AN UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUP:
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Front cover photo : Three Jehai men dressed in their headgear (*renun*).

In the centre is Seneberek the Jehai *halaq*

Back cover photo : Dr Paul Chen and Penghulu Charang Kiroi

Title page photo : A Jehai household unit

Foreword page : Jehai Children

Acknowledgements page photo : Jehai women and children

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FOREWORD

Here is an exciting account of how an unreached people group – the Jehai - was reached. The Jehai is one of the six ethnic Negrito groups of the Orang Asli cluster. What does it take to reach an unreached people group? Conceptually, it would take cross-cultural evangelism and church planting. Reading Paul Chen's work, one would add that it also requires prayer and research. Reading further, one would not escape the fact that cross-cultural evangelism is only a partner in the overall Christian mission. In the context of the Kingdom of God, it is never accomplished in isolation from the other basic needs of the people. Reaching the unreached takes into serious account the pressing needs of the people, whether it is food security, health care, educational opportunity and physical safety. Reaching the Jehai at the Temenggor Forest captures the correct approach in seeing people within a holistic framework of kingdom thinking.



The work among the Jehai is remarkable because it has emerged out of a holistic framework of kingdom thinking. Paul infuses in the framework the cultural understanding of the people along with their health, economic, educational and spiritual needs. Lest one thinks that this framework is merely a conceptual one, Paul demonstrates that this framework is filled with love, kindness, patience, wisdom and tenacity. It is not a “wooden” framework to say the least. Rather it is an exciting story of a people’s journey towards faith in Jesus Christ.

It is exciting because the story becomes alive at several points. The story is filled with anthropological insights of the Jehai and how they respond to other people and circumstances in accordance to their worldview. The “cool” and “hot” emotions are fascinating insights into the psyche of the people. The remarkable revelation comes about when they see that ‘the fruit of the Spirit’ correspond to their understanding of “coolness.” The story becomes alive when medical care and basic health needs of the Jehai were met in very interesting circumstances. Paul’s vocation as doctor and medical professor brings significant events and people into the story. The ‘hour of the Jehai’ bursts into stark reality everytime a group of Jehai are water baptized in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. There are other ‘live moments’, like the building of the multipurpose hall, the discipling of the people, imparting cultivating skills, teaching children and speaking to the authorities.

What does it take to reach and disciple the Jehai? It takes team effort. It takes a sustained and coordinated team work to disciple them. It takes sustained focus and endurance. It takes tenacity of mind and spirit to overcome obstacles. It takes humility to ask for help from others and learn from others. It takes a heart of faithfulness to the cause. Nine years of sustained focus and labour saw the bearing of fruit of their efforts.

Paul is quick to acknowledge that there were challenges, obstacles, and resistance at several fronts of the work. Lot of prayer, wisdom from above and unmitigated patience saw the team overcoming the problems one by one. Interestingly some of the key problems were solved in close partnership with the Jehai.

One of the highlights of this work is the careful and wise thinking that went into preserving the language, music, dance and ethnic identity in their journey to faith. Several missiological truths come alive as Paul narrates the growth and development of the people in their walk of faith. Truly an indigenous church has taken a firm root amongst them.

Finally, it is simply the love and grace of the Spirit of Christ that had initiated and moved and propelled Paul’s team to reach the Jehai in the way they did. And as Paul humbly acknowledged, the glory goes to God. Thank God, there will be Jehai in heaven!

This is a significant contribution to the missions in Malaysia. It is highly recommended for every local student in missions. It would inspire similar endeavors to reach other unreached groups in the country especially among the Orang Asli cluster.

Doraisingam Manikam
Missions Director
Full Gospel Assembly

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the many donors who contributed in cash and in kind to the Jehai work over so many years. We trust that your valued contribution will continue into the future. Finally I would like to acknowledge the faithful efforts of my own team, headed by my wife Dr. Chen Siew Tin, who worked tirelessly and have been a key factor in touching the lives of the Jehai.

Paul Chen

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Reaching Out To Our Relatives And Friends

Several years ago, I heard a speaker expound that the Bible consists just of two themes. The first theme deals with the completed work of Jesus where He chose to die on the Cross for the sins of man. Jesus redeemed the lost with His blood at Calvary so that man may be reconciled with the Father in heaven and become the children of God. The speaker then went on to say that the second theme deals with the unfinished work of Jesus which He left for us to complete. Jesus set it out in several forms one of which was in the form of the Great Commission. Matthew 28:18-20 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.

Without a doubt, one of the most important duties of every born again Christian is to reach out with the good news to those around him who have yet to hear the good news and to accept Jesus as their personal Saviour. All the more if that person was our own relative or close friend. Bringing the good news to relatives and friends often means that we are dealing with someone of the same *ethne* or ethno-linguistic group as our own (evangelism).

On the other hand, in a multiracial society such as Malaysia or when we are working outside of Malaysia, it may be that we need to communicate across cultures and ethno-linguistic barriers (missions).

In Malaysia, cross cultural missions is of paramount importance. According to Sealink (2006) there are an estimated 200 people groups in the three countries of Malaysia, Brunei and Singapore, which can be arranged into ten People Cluster Groups such as the Malay Cluster, the Chinese Cluster, the Peranakan Cluster, the Indian Cluster and a number of Indigenous People Clusters in Sabah and Sarawak and the Orang Asli Cluster as well as the Migrant Cluster. It is almost impossible for each of us to seriously confine ourselves just to our own ethne or people group for all our lives. In the course of just 24 hours, each of us will interact with other Malaysians of many different ethno-linguistic backgrounds.

What Is The Aim Of this Book On The Jehai?

This book examines how Christians reached out and adopted a suffering displaced semi-nomadic tribe of Negrito Orang Asli located close to the Thai border over 400 km north of Kuala Lumpur. The tribe had been displaced by the Communist Insurgency and the flooding of their traditional tribal territories when the manmade Temenggor Lake, in 1975, flooded the fertile valleys of the Perak River in the Belum and Temenggor Forests. Having been deprived of their traditional subsistence base both by the flooding as well as by enforced regroupment of the Jehai by the government, the Jehai, began to suffer from under nutrition, malnutrition, disease and death. Over the next 25 years, the suffering Jehai were disillusioned by the unfulfilled promises of authorities and faced an uncertain future. As the people cried out to their ancestor gods, there was no answer. As they cried out to the God whom they had yet to know, God responded by using various people to answer the cry of the disillusioned people group, the Jehai of the Temenggor Forest and the story unfolds from there.

Of What Significance Are The Lessons Described In The Book?

The Jehai is not the first and will not be the last unreached people group that Christians will reach with the love of God. Many teams of fervent Christians will be moved by God to reach out to the numerous unreached people groups in Malaysia and elsewhere in South East Asia and in the wider world including areas in the 10/40 window. Many of these Christians will face similar obstacles as was faced by the group that reached out to the Jehai over the period of some nine years described in this book.

Perhaps even more important is the fact that, out of the six Negrito Orang Asli people groups, five of these Negrito people groups have yet to hear the Word of God or to be delivered from abject poverty that grips their existence. The call of God to Christians to reach out to the Kensiu, Kintaq, Lanoh, Mendriq and the Bateq is already sounding. Perhaps one or more of the readers of this book, will respond and answer the cry of the Kensiu, Kintaq, Lanoh, Mendriq or Bateq for help even as these tribes face exploitation, loss of traditional territories, abject poverty and possible extinction as a people group.

We will examine a few definitions before proceeding to look at the Jehai.

What Is A People Group?

A popular translation of the Greek term *ethne* among Christian organizations is the term People Group. This can be defined in a somewhat over simplistic manner as a group of people who perceive themselves to have a common affinity for one another because of their shared language and ethnicity.

What Is A People Cluster?

A people cluster is a grouping of ethnic people groups often based on a common identity of language or culture, as exemplified by the Chinese Cluster of peoples or the Malay cluster of peoples.

Who Are The Unreached People Groups?

Most commonly, Christian organizations define an unreached people group as “an ethnic or linguistically distinct culture that has not yet heard any Christian teaching”. However, the Joshua Project takes a broader definition and defines an unreached people group or least reached people group as “a people group among whom there is no indigenous community of believing Christians with adequate numbers and resources to evangelise this people group”

Are There Any Unreached People Groups Among The Orang Asli Of Malaysia?

If we take the narrower definition of unreached people groups used by many Christian organizations, five of the six Negrito Orang Asli people groups would fall within the definition of “an ethnic or linguistically distinct culture that has not heard any Christian teaching.” Until recently the Jehai people group had not heard Christian teaching at all. Their story is set out in the paragraphs that follow.



Figure 1.1 The Jehai live in semi-nomadic bands. These Jehai children depend upon the forest for food.



Figure 1.2 Jehai men walking past their base camp in the Belum Forest.

CHAPTER 2 ORANG ASLI

The Orang Asli Cluster Of Peoples

The term Orang Asli is a Malay word meaning “the original people” and refers to 19 distinct people groups who differ from one another in language, belief system, economy, social organization and physical features such as hair, stature and physical characteristics. They are all non-Malay indigenous people who descended from the people who occupied the Malay Peninsula before the arrival of the Malays.

The Orang Asli are officially clustered into three clusters of Orang Asli, namely, the Proto-Malay, the Senoi and the Negrito (Semang). The Proto-Malay is mainly in the South and is made up of the Jakun, Orang Kanaq, Orang Kuala, Orang Seletar, Semelai, and Temuan. Many of the Proto-Malay have lost their original language and now speak Malay. The Senoi are mainly located in Central Peninsular Malaysia and are made up of the Che Wong, Jah Hut, Mah Meri, Semai, Semaq Beri, Temiar and Temoq. Although many speak Malay, the Senoi have managed to retain their own languages. The Negrito group consist of the Bateq, Jehai, Kensiu, Kintaq, Lanoh and Mendriq. The Department of Statistics reports that at the time of the Census in 2000, there were 72,871 Senoi (or 55% of the Orang Asli were Senoi), 55,852 (or 42%) Proto-Malays, and 4,150 (or 3%) Negrito (Semang peoples).

Slavery

During the 18th and 19th Century, the Orang Asli were the object of slave raids mainly by the Malays and Batak of Sumatra who considered the Orang Asli “savages” suitable for capture into the slave trade. The raiding parties would kill off the adult men and capture the women and children for sale as slaves or as gifts to the local rulers and chieftains. Despite the abolition of slavery in 1884, the trade continued until early 1900. One result was that it drove the Orang Asli deeper into the hills and forests. The derogatory term Sakai means slave and is a detested term.

Official Policy Towards The Orang Asli

Under the British Administration, the Orang Asli was viewed as anthropological curiosities under the care of the Curator of the Perak Museum, Taiping. In 1936, H.D. Noone in his report, sought to perpetuate the policy of the British that the Orang Asli remain in isolation from the rest of the Malayan population. Noone advocated the establishment of large areas of the land for the Orang Asli who should be allowed to live with their own traditions and laws. He also proposed that they be taught agricultural skills and that their handicrafts be promoted. He also proposed protecting the Orang Asli against the introduction of alcohol and external influences from unscrupulous peddlers. Noone died during World War II. His proposals, even though they were never implemented, formed the basis of the “Aboriginal Policy” of the Government.



Figure 2.1 The Semang (Negrito) peoples are woolly haired and are more closely related to the Andamanese Negrito than to their neighbouring Senoi Orang Asli.



Figure 2.2 A Jehai camp community prepares to cook two porcupines that they killed. Sharing meat from a kill is determined by cultural rules on sharing.

The Emergency Period

The civil war between the Communist insurgents & the Government took place from 1948 to 1960. From 1960 to 1989, the insurgency continued mainly in the North in the areas that were the traditional territories of the Jehai and ended only with the Haatyai Accord in 1989 when the Communist insurgents laid down their arms. During the early period before 1960, the impact of the war on the Orang Asli was significant. The Communists received substantial support from the rural people and many of the Chinese were forcibly relocated into new villages to cut off this support. The Communists also received food, labour and intelligence from the Orang Asli. The Government, in mistaken haste, forcibly herded many of the Orang Asli into settlements where some 7,000 of the Orang Asli died in crowded camps. Consequently, the Government realised the need to win the hearts of the Orang Asli and the post of Adviser on Aborigines was created. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs (today known as Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli – JHEOA) was expanded. “Jungle forts” were created for the Orang Asli to introduce better health facilities and basic education. Later this was abandoned for a “patterned settlement”, later called “regroupment schemes”, which proved successful in denying the Communist insurgents support from the Orang Asli. The emergency ended in 1960 for most of the Peninsula and opened the doors for the Orang Asli to receive

direct support from the state. In the case of some Negrito, who were largely nomadic, the “regroupment schemes” did not arrive until much later and even today there are small bands of nomads who have not given up their nomadic lifestyle although most Negrito today lead a semi-nomadic lifestyle.

The Aboriginal Peoples Act 1954

The Aboriginal Peoples Act of 1954 is a unique piece of legislation that caters for one cluster of ethnic peoples namely the Orang Asli. Its primary aim was to protect the Orang Asli against Communist indoctrination and forced support of the Communists, hence it prohibits non-Orang Asli from staying overnight in Orang Asli villages and prohibits the entry of written material or any material that can convey messages. The Act treats the Orang Asli as if they are incapable of looking after themselves and need protection. However it gives the Headman, appointed by the Minister, the discretion to permit a non-Orang Asli to stay overnight. It also stipulates that no Orang Asli child shall be compelled to follow any religious class without the consent of the parents or guardians. The Act allows the Orang Asli to follow their traditional way of life. The Act provides for the establishment of Orang Asli Areas and Orang Asli Reserves, but it also gives the state the final say and the right to reacquire the land with very little or no compensation except for a few cents for each fruit tree on the land. The state is also not obliged to allocate alternative lands for land that is reacquired. After four decades of the Aboriginal Peoples Act, it would seem that an unhealthy state of paternalism towards the Orang Asli has developed with the JHEOA seeing itself as the patron of the Orang Asli and often acting without consulting the Orang Asli on any plans for their future such as moving them into a “regroupment scheme”

CHAPTER 3

THE NEGRITO (SEMANG) AND SENOI

The Negrito Cluster

As stated earlier the Negrito (Semang) cluster of Orang Asli consist of six small but distinct ethnic groups, namely, the Bateq, Jehai, Kensiu, Kintaq, Lanoh and Mendriq. The Negrito (Semang) are Mon-Khmer speakers, who live in the mountainous interior of North Peninsular Malaysia relatively close to the Thai border, with some members of the Negrito tribes such as the Kensiu and Kintaq living both in Malaysia as well as in Thailand. These tribes do not recognise any international border and they cross from one country into the other without being aware of the border.

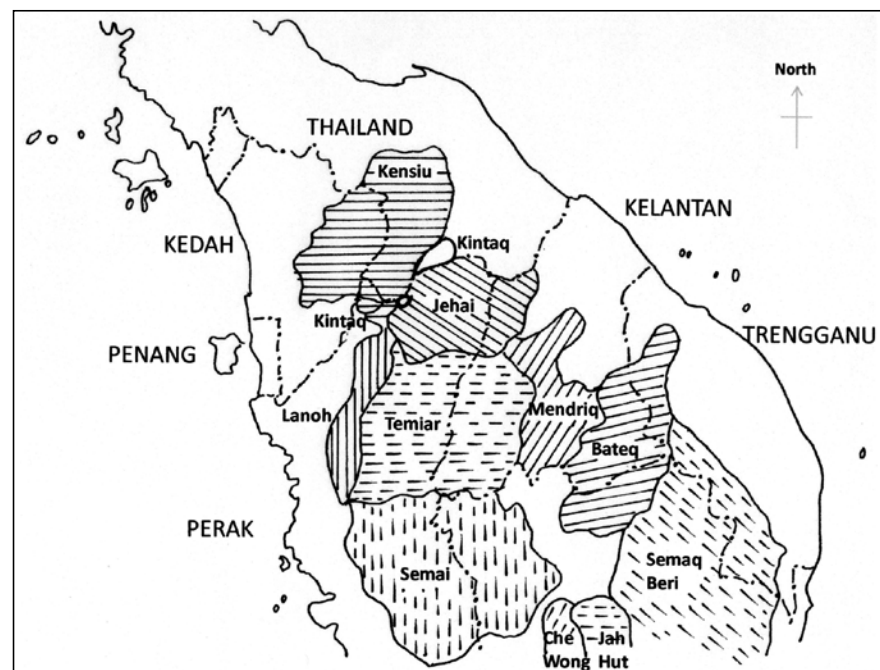
The Negrito are physically, culturally and linguistically more closely related to the Andamanese Negrito and to the Mani Negrito of Thailand, both of which speak a Mon-Khmer language, than even to their neighbouring Senoi Orang Asli such as the Temiar who live beside the Jehai. Most probably they adopted the Mon-Khmer language of a wave of Mon-Khmer migrants several thousand years ago. The subsequent arrival of the Malay speaking peoples pushed aside the earlier Mon-Khmer migrants, but the Negrito continued to retain their Mon-Khmer language despite the social and cultural pressures to adopt Malay.

The population of the Negrito in Malaysia is quite small. A head count by the JHEOA in 1993 showed that there were 1,049 Jehai, 960 Bateq, 359 Lanoh, 235 Kintaq, 224 Kensiu, and 145 Mendriq, the total Negrito population in 1993 being 2,972. The Census of 2000 showed that the total number of Negrito was 4,150. All the six Negrito people groups have semi-nomadic

camp communities as well as nomadic bands. The Lanoh are composed of subgroups called the Semnam, the Sabum, and the Lanoh Yir.



Figure 3.1 The Semang (Negrito) cluster of Orang Asli include the Bateq, Jehai, Kensiu, Kintaq, Lanoh and Mendriq.



Map 1 Distribution of the Semang (Negrito) cluster of Bateq, Jehai, Kensiu, Kintaq, Lanoh and Mendriq Orang Asli in relation to the Senoi cluster of Temiar, Semai, Che Wong, Jah Hut and Semaq Beri.

The Senoi Cluster

The Senoi cluster of Orang Asli consist of seven distinct ethnic groups, namely the Che Wong, Jah Hut, Mah Meri, Semai, Semaq Beri, Temiar and Temoq. The Semai are the largest group of Orang Asli, numbering about 39,000 and occupy South Perak and part of Pahang and part of Kelantan. The Temiar are the immediate southerly neighbours of the Jehai and are the second largest group of Orang Asli, numbering about 23,000.

In subsequent pages, when we deal with the Jehai, we will note that the Temiar, have traditionally occupied the southern part of the Temenggor Forest and are close neighbours of the Jehai who occupy the northern part of the Temenggor Forest and the whole of the Belum Forest that lies north of the Temenggor. Although the two ethnics groups are linguistically different, due to their close contact in the fringes of their traditional territories, some of the Jehai speak Temiar and there is some extent of intermarriage between the Jehai and the Temiar both in Perak and in Kelantan. For example in the village of Sungei Tekam in the Temenggor Forest, about 90 per cent of the people are either Jehai or Jehai-Temiar and about 10 per cent are Temiar. In this village, most of the people speak Jehai, Temiar and many can also speak Malay.

Unlike the Jehai, the Semai and Temiar have had a longer history of living in settlements and are no longer nomadic, even though many still make sorties into the forest and maintain a semi-nomadic lifestyle. Consequently, the Semai and Temiar are quite good agriculturalists, unlike the Jehai, many of whom still maintain a nomadic lifestyle of being hunter gatherers, with very little skill in agriculture.

The Temiar have a strong tradition of spirit mediums and are well known for their belief in dreams and the guidance such dreams play in their lives. The Temiar hold special public performances when the spirit mediums sing dream songs to the accompaniment of bamboo beats and dances. The spirit mediums often enter into a trance to seek the guidance of spirits.

CHAPTER 4

THE JEHAJ: NOMADS OF THE BELUM & TEMENGGOR FOREST

Jehai View Of Creation

The Jehai believe that the earth was created by their mythical ancestors, who also created the flora on earth. They believe that these mythical ancestors and their descendants were immortal and had bodies that were soft and ethereal unlike the human body which is solid to the touch. They were small and their immortality was due to “cool” transparent nectar like liquid (*caboh*) that flowed through their bodies, quite unlike the “hot” blood that flows through the human body. These mythical ancestors subsisted on a constantly available supply of nectar, seedless fruits and plants. The Jehai believe that these mythical immortal ancestors not only created the flora but continue to sustain its regeneration in a constant cycle of growth and re-growth. Because these mythical ancestors had “cool” liquid flowing through them, they never felt any desire for meat or sexual acts. They formed their children by sucking through their closed hands that held the juice of the ginger leaves until a small foetus emerged through their hands. The mythical father then placed the foetus face down on his chest as an act of bonding which is done even today by the Jehai father when he places his newborn infant on his chest.

The Jehai believe that at a later period, some of the off-spring of these mythical ancestors, began to indulge in “hot” activities such as sexual acts and consequently lost their “cool” transparent liquid which came to be replaced by “hot” blood and hence became mortal and thus became the ancestors of present day Jehai. The women now began to become pregnant and mortality came into their lives. The Jehai believe that humans are thus, the descendants

of immortal ancestors some of whose off-spring lost their immortality through indulgence in “hot” sexual activities and the craving of meat. Having lost their immortality, humans are now subject to sickness, death, and “hot” desires such as sexual acts, anger, hate, jealousy, self centeredness, greed, and many other evils.

The Jehai believe that the acquired “hot” characteristics of mortal humans caused their immortal ancestors who preserved their immortality by avoiding sexual acts, to sanctify themselves by moving away to a “higher layer” leaving the mortals at the “lower layer” of the universe. Thus there came to be a separation of the immortal ancestors from the mortal humans, and the two stay at two separate levels of the universe. At the “higher layer” live the mythical immortal ancestors. At the “lower layer” live the human mortals and animals surrounded and fed by the ever regenerating flora gifted by their benevolent mythical immortal ancestors. The Jehai believe that at both the “higher layer” that the immortal ancestors inhabit as well as at the “lower layer” inhabited by the mortals, there are vast forests that provide sustenance to the ancestors and their human mortal descendants. However they believe that at the “higher layer” the fruits are non-seasonal and plentiful all year around. At the “lower layer” the fruits are seasonal. They believe that all the flora and fruits are a gift of the immortal ancestors who are full of benevolence for their progeny.

The Jehai consider themselves to be the “great grandchildren” of immortal ancestors and that all present day Jehai are therefore equally entitled to the gifts of their immortal ancestors. Jehai believe that the immortal ancestors are greatly benevolent and care for their “great grandchildren”, the present day Jehai. They believe that it is the generative power of their immortal ancestors that ensures that the forest regenerates itself in an everlasting cycle, hence their understanding of ecological balance is heavily weighed by their belief that it is the generative power of their ancestors that is the critical factor, consequently, the effect of logging and the mass destruction of their forests has not evoked the kind of resistance seen among some tribes in Sarawak.

Jehai View Of The Origin Of Animals

In their belief system, various species of animals originated from a number of mortal humans who chose to separate off from their fellow humans by transforming themselves into a variety of animals and special plants. The Jehai believe that bees have descended from transformed humans who were “hot”, forceful and highly demanding persons. They believe that in ancient

times, the stinging bees lived with a highly aggressive person named *Karei*, who eventually became the thunder spirit. *Karei* now lives in the black clouds that appear during thunder storms. Jehai believe that *Karei* is both thunder as well as maker of thunder. The Jehai believe that stinging bees are especially aggressive. Consequently, the “cool” nectar that bees collect from flowers are changed into “hot” honey when the nectar passes through the body of the bees. Bees are thus viewed as transformed humans and progeny of the immortal ancestors.

Jehai believe that some humans, in ancient times, chose to become bamboo plants and others to become wild tubers (*Dioscorea* spp) and the poison of the Ipoh tree (*Antiaris toxicaria*) used by the Jehai to tip their poison darts.

The Jehai believe that the bamboo is a transformed human mortal who has an exceedingly “hot” character, with an excitable and noisy personality. Hence bamboo is the ideal plant to be used to make a blowpipe since its excitable nature allows the owner of the blowpipe to rely upon it to bring him gifts of food. There is a story that the poison of the dart is the result of the transformation of a highly anti-social person who was rather selfish and who was killed by his relatives because of his anti-social behaviour. He became the Ipoh tree poison. His extreme “hot” character is perceived to be due to his violent death and anti-social behaviour and is seen to manifest itself as an eagerness to kill, a perfect characteristic of blowpipe and poison dart. Since the blowpipe guides the poison dart to its kill, the animal killed by the hunter is perceived to be a gift of the blowpipe to the hunter, even though the actual killing was the result of the poison dart.

The Jehai believe that the wild tuber, a form of wild yam, is a transformed human mortal who had a great craving for meat so much so that he lured his three sons into the jungle, killed them one by one and ate them. Due to his extreme craving for meat, which could not be satisfied, he ended up eating his arms and legs, whereupon he was killed by his relatives. After his and his sons’ death, they transformed themselves into a variety of wild tubers. Because of their violent deaths, they are believed to have a “hot” emotional nature which explains why wild tubers grow so rapidly.

Consequently, bamboo, poison of the Ipoh tree and wild tubers hold the same relational position to the Jehai as animals, namely that they are all progeny of the mythical immortal ancestors of the Jehai.



Figure 4.1 Jehai Orang Asli of the Belum Forest live in thatch huts with bamboo walls. The men wear loincloths.



Figure 4.2 Jehai showing a piece of wild tuber that he has dug out of the forest floor.

Jehai View Of The Soul

The Jehai believe that humans have a soul-substance (*raway*), the condition of which determines the state of his health. The soul-substance (*raway*) should be “cool” in which condition it manifests as a state of contentment. Thus the person who has sufficient “cool” soul-substance is in a state of satisfaction and with feelings of relatedness to other Jehai and to his immortal ancestors. He has a sense of being autonomous, satisfied physically as when the person is not subject to hunger, thirst, discomfort, or pain. However if the person comes under “hot” emotional stress, the healthy “cool” soul-substance is driven out of his body and replaced by “hot” emotions such as hunger, thirst, discomfort, pain, anger, frustration, hate, jealousy, rejection, resentment, sadness or grief. In such a state, when the “coolness” is driven out of his body, the person becomes prone to sickness, accidents and even death.

Jehai believe that the soul-substance (*raway*) leaves the body during dreams and can travel to faraway places. They also believe that the soul-substance is like an invisible mist, similar to the scent or bouquet of a flower, that surrounds each individual, and that as individuals make social contact, the soul-substance of one mixes with that of the other. Hence if a person meets with another who has a “cool” soul-substance, it will mix with the bouquet of the soul-substance of the other and impart its “coolness”. Conversely, if a person has social contact with a person with “hot” emotions, the “hotness” will mix with the bouquet of the soul-substance of the other and impart to it its “hotness” possibly resulting in “cool” soul-substance being driven out. Hence social contact with persons who exhibit “hot” emotions tends to be avoided, since there is a high risk of picking up “hotness” and the unhealthy consequence of becoming prone to accidents, illness and death. Such accidents may be from a snake bite, bee sting, scorpion sting, fall from a tree, injury or sickness. Death may be due to any of the above as well as being killed by a tiger, elephant or any wild animal or a falling tree or even being drowned in a swollen river or the lake. It is common for a person who is upset to stay in his hut and avoid the forest until he feels “cool”.

This Jehai view of how the loss of “coolness” of the soul-substance and the related development of “hot” emotions leading to proneness to accidents, sickness and death is a cultural mechanism to reduce the likelihood of aggression in the person who is emotionally upset by anger, frustration, hate, jealousy and resentment, since he is the one who is the object of danger

rather than the provocateur. The Jehai reaction towards the risk of becoming emotionally “hot” is the tendency towards avoidance of further social contact, sometimes for long periods, with the person with “hot” emotions. Accidents, sickness and death to which a person with “hot” emotions is believed to be especially prone, is perceived most likely to take place in the forest. Hence an aggrieved party will often retire to his hut for a few days until his emotions have healed or he will seek the help of the spirit-medium, the *halaq*, who will restore “coolness” by blowing “cool” mists, not visible to others except to the *halaq* who has received it from the immortal ancestors or familiar spirits.

Hence, Jehai are careful to avoid arousing “hot” emotions in others, so as to avoid pushing out the essential “cool” soul-substance of others. In the case of Jehai, since all present day Jehai are the descendants of common immortal ancestors, all Jehai are considered as relatives within the larger family of Jehai people. Jehai perceive that other Orang Asli are somewhat akin to the Jehai and therefore are a little more likely to have “cool” soul-substance. Nevertheless other non-Jehai Orang Asli are viewed with an element of caution and recognised to be different from Jehai and more likely to be “hotter” than Jehai and hence to be avoided if possible.

On the other hand outsiders (non-Orang Asli) are perceived to be even more prone to “hot” emotions and much more to be avoided for the risk of being emotionally aroused through mixing of soul-substance mists like “hot” emotions from the outsiders. At initial contact with nomadic Jehai, an outsider is often struck by silence, timidity and seeming fear that Jehai exhibit to new contacts that they are not familiar with. It is almost like the Jehai would rather avoid contact, watching the outsider with keen observation, and from a distance. No attempt is made to welcome strangers from the outside. However, once nomadic Jehai have developed a deep trust in an outsider who they have become familiar with, the silence, timidity and avoidance melts away and is replaced by a trust far greater than is seen in urban communities. Outsiders therefore must be most careful to be gentle and cautious in their initial contact with the Jehai. There should be great care to avoid evoking “hot” emotions through any seemingly harmless behaviour which is viewed by the Jehai as “hot” and provocative or causing a sense of the loss of self autonomy. Any aggressive behaviour is likely to evoke avoidance behaviour on the part of the Jehai.

Jehai View Of Death

The Jehai view that the soul-substance (*raway*) of a living person is affectionate and tends to seek the company of members of society. However, the soul-substance (*yal*) of the dead are far more likely to have a malevolent attitude towards the living. Particularly soon after death, the soul-substance (*yal*) of the deceased is unhappy and lonely at having lost its body, and tends to seek friends to lure to the land of the dead. In its state of unhappiness it has forgotten the kind acts of its close relatives and will try its best to lure them to accompany it to the land of the dead in the direction of the setting sun.

When one of the great chiefs of the Jehai dies, the Jehai believe that his soul-substance (*yal*) in its malevolence may turn into a were-tiger. The family will nurse him during the day, caring for him and feeding him. But each evening as dusk approaches, all the people in his camp would leave the camp and go across a passage of water to the land opposite and camp it out there. Early each morning, they would return to see if the chief was still alive. None would take the risk of staying behind in case his departed soul-substance (*yal*) taking the form of a were-tiger forced them to accompany the chief to the land of the dead.

The Jehai believe that the dead eventually return to the “higher layer” and join their immortal ancestors in the vast forest where they subsist on fruits and nectar of flowers that are perpetually present as non seasonal fruits. However, the Jehai believe that the deceased do not play a significant role in providing present day Jehai with gifts of fruit through a constant regeneration of the forest. That task is solely that of their immortal ancestors. It is thus not surprising that the deceased are not traced as ancestors beyond the memory of the living. At best they are remembered for a couple of generations. The Jehai do not have a written language and the stories of their ancestry are an oral tradition passed by mouth from one generation to the next.

Jehai View Of Maintaining Good Relationships

It has been mentioned earlier, that the Jehai believe that their immortal ancestors owe their immortality to the “cool” transparent nectar like liquid (*caboh*) that flows through their bodies, quite unlike the “hot” blood that flows through the human body. It is supposed that all Jehai have some of this “cool” transparent nectar like liquid (*caboh*) even though their mortal bodies now have “hot” blood flowing through. It is the presence of this “cool” transparent liquid (*caboh*) that binds them to one another and to their immortal ancestors

in a relatedness that is best seen among their own Jehai. It is also believed that the opposite state of desire for separation (versus relatedness) from other humans particularly outsiders is the result of “hot” emotions associated with the mortal “hot” blood that their mortal bodies now have.

This balance between “coolness” and “hotness” is an underlying factor that governs Jehai notions of sharing and equity. The Jehai notion of justice is based on a balance of these two states. If someone is left out of sharing, for example of some food, it is believed to provoke feelings of “hot” emotions which can be dangerous to the subject who feels left out. For example, if a Jehai hunter returns with some animal that he has killed, he is expected by their social rules to share the kill in a manner determined by culture. He will normally divide the animal into five portions and give one portion to each of his close relatives according to set rules. The families that receive a share are then obliged according to kinship rules to further subdivide their portion and distribute it accordingly. In this way most members of the camp will receive a portion. However should a party feel that they have received a smaller portion than they are entitled to, a feeling of “hot” emotions may be provoked. The Jehai have two mechanisms to reduce unhappiness and to maintain good relations. The first is that the name of the animal that has been killed may not be mentioned until it has been consumed. Since the name cannot be mentioned, it becomes impossible to become contentious about sharing its meat. Contention about the perceived unfair portion is thus not possible until after the animal has been completely consumed. The same rule applies not only to all animals killed, but it applies to wild tubers and bamboo shoots, all of which are believed to have a human origin whose names may not be mentioned until after the food has been completely consumed. This serves to dampen any aggressiveness. Fruits and plant foods other than wild tuber and bamboo shoot are believed to be the gift of the immortal ancestors and there is no taboo about mentioning their names.

The second mechanism to maintain good relations is the belief that it is harmful to leave any one out of the sharing. It will provoke “hot” emotions that can lead to an imbalance of his soul-substance (*raway*) likely to provoke accidents, sickness and death. This has been mentioned earlier when discussing the Jehai view of the soul. The offended becomes the victim of the offence. However since all Jehai are believed to be born with some “cool” transparent liquid (*caboh*), he views all Jehai as his relatives since they all share the same immortal ancestors and that the *caboh* in all Jehai promotes relatedness, hence it would be a great loss to allow any member of the camp to become provoked by deliberate unjust sharing, so much so that they become prone to sickness,

accidents or death. Hence Jehai tend to take great pains to follow the cultural rules of sharing so as not to lose a member of the camp through provocation into “hot” emotions.

Van der Sluys (2000) notes that according to the frustration-aggression hypothesis, frustration in receiving one’s entitled share could give rise to feelings of anger in the victim, which might be expressed by aggressive acts against the offending party. However because in the Jehai world view accident-proneness is a consequence of such anger, a victim will feel fear of possible calamity instead of anger. In the Jehai fear, instead of anger, is the culturally determined emotion that a frustrated individual experiences.

Another area, where maintaining good relationships is critical, is the area of self autonomy. The Jehai believe that to force a person against his will is to provoke him into “hot” emotions and suffer the risk of proneness to accidents, sickness and death, described earlier. Thus the Jehai try not to coerce anyone into doing something against his will. If a person is being provoked to do something against his will, he may say “I do not want to.” Those around him will say “He is not in the mood” and they will leave him alone so as to avoid provoking any further. The Jehai will tolerate a high degree of self autonomy so long as it does not endanger the balance of soul-substance of others.

Older children thus enjoy quite a degree of self autonomy. A young child may refuse to go to the boarding school and the parents will not force him to go. A young girl or boy may decide to live together. There are no marriage ceremonies among the Jehai. Their parents may advice them regarding the desirability of the girl or boy, but they will not insist. Should the couple discover that their feelings are very negative, they will part. Hence it is quite common for brothers and sisters to have different fathers and different mothers as unions may be quite tenuous. Cohabitation can change when the partners feel negative to each other. It is fairly common that men and women change marriage partners three to four times during their lives.

Although the shared Jehai view, described above, of how good relationship should be maintained is the cultural norm, it is possible to come across a few Jehai who are not only “hot” in emotions but quite provocative in their relationships.

Jehai Camp Communities

A Jehai nomadic community consists of a small group of families, the basic unit of which is the nuclear family. Such camp communities form a patchwork of camps scattered throughout the Belum and Temenggor Forest. Their composition shifts and their size vary as members leave and others join the group. Membership in each camp group is flexible, as there is a constant movement of membership, partly to accommodate social relationships so as to maintain good relationships among the members of any group.

Such nomadic groups may stay at a site for several weeks and move as determined by food supplies in that area. In the past, the Jehai used to use bows and arrows, but these seem to have dropped into disuse. Their favourite hunting weapon is the bamboo blowpipe and the poison dart. Poison is from the sap of the Ipoh tree (*Antiaris toxicaria*). The blowpipe is made of two tubes of bamboo. The inner tube is smaller and fits into the outer tube which acts as a protective cover. The bamboo tubes are the internodes between two nodes. At one end is the mouth piece made of the craved root of the bamboo plant or of wood. The darts are made from bamboo and tipped with poison. Each dart is about 15 cm long and is stored ready for use in a bamboo quiver with a cover made of plaited rattan. Both the bamboo and poison are believed to be transformed humans with highly excitable souls and hence animals killed with the blowpipe and poison dart are viewed as gifts of the blowpipe to the hunter. Although the poison dart kills, it is the blowpipe that guides the darts hence the gift of food is perceived to be the gift of the blowpipe.

On a hunting foraging trip, the Jehai carry a long knife, as well as a blowpipe and a quiver of poison darts. They have not been known to carry spears, unlike the Penan of Sarawak (Chen, 1990)

More recently, many of these small communities have settled into a semi-nomadic mode in which more permanent structures are built and form the base camp from which forays are made into the surrounding forests where groups may stay for a few days to several weeks. Where the camp is a temporary one, shelter is made of a few sticks and leaves arranged in the form of a lean-to. More permanent houses at the base camp are larger and are made of bamboo with a thatch roof of palm leaves of the *Calamus castaneus*. Jehai camps have a constantly mobile composition. New members may join while others leave. Part of the reason is that there is a constant renewing of bonds between peoples as they visit one another from one camp to another. They may travel alone though the forest. Even young women have been noted to travel alone

through the forest for several days with only a baby for company. En route they may stop at camps and then move on to their intended destination several days away.



Figure 4.3 A thatch lean-to serves as a temporary camp for nomadic Jehai who move every fortnightly to a new hunting ground once there is no more food in the area.



Figure 4.4 The more permanent base camp of semi-nomadic Jehai in the Belum Forest.

Jehai Dress And Musical Instruments

Jehai men in the deep jungle still wear loin cloths. Jehai do not tattoo their bodies but the men may pierce their nasal septum and wear a porcupine quill as a decoration. During celebrations, the Jehai men and women wear headgear (*renun*) made of young palm leaves which they often decorate with flowers. They will also wear a shoulder slung strap (*tenuak*) made of the same young palm leaves. Jehai men may decorate their faces with red and black stripes. On such occasions, Jehai men decorate their loin cloth with a twig of bright coloured leaves that cover their backs very similar to the use of coloured leaves by Papua New Guinea Highlanders.

Jehai most commonly use a bamboo orchestra of several pairs of bamboo that rhythmically hit a log of wood. Each pair of bamboo consists of a long bamboo and a short bamboo that are alternately used to hit the log producing an alternating beat. The several pairs of bamboo make up the bamboo orchestra (*centong*). The bamboo orchestra is most often used to welcome visitors at a ceremony known as *sewang*. The *sewang* may also be used for healing or when a death takes place.



Figure 4.5 Seneberek Keladi demonstrating the Jehai flute and lamellophone.

Another Jehai musical instrument is what may be called a lamellophone that consists of a flexible tongue attached to a bamboo frame. When plucked, it produces a sound generated by a vibrating column of air. The Jehai also use a flute made of a short length of bamboo of about 30 cm.



Figure 4.6 Jehai bamboo orchestra (centong).

Jehai View Of Bamboo

Jehai use bamboo for many purposes. Bamboo blowpipes, darts, bamboo quivers, and bamboo orchestra and musical instruments have been mentioned. Jehai also use bamboo to build their houses, especially the larger houses at base camps. Split bamboo is woven to form walls, floors and partitions. Bamboo is also used to cook rice. The rice is wrapped in a banana leaf and stuffed into bamboo and left over the fire to cook. Bamboo is also used as a water container.

The Jehai are highly skilled in making bamboo rafts and paddling them across rivers, streams and the Temenggor Lake. Children learn early and can paddle a raft over long distances. Bamboo fish traps and bamboo fences are fairly commonly used. The Jehai used to make bamboo combs but not anymore as cheap plastic combs have come to replace these handcrafted bamboo combs.

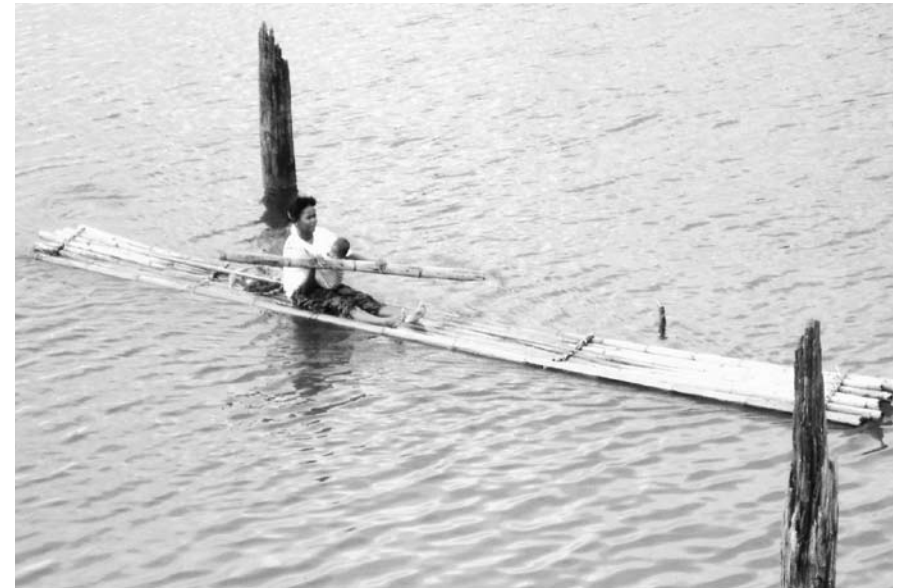


Figure 4.7 The Jehai are highly skilled in making bamboo rafts and paddling them across rivers and the Temenggor Lake. Here a Jehai woman, with her infant, paddles across the lake.

Bamboo shoots are a source of food. With so many uses, it is not surprising that the Jehai believe that bamboo are humans that transformed themselves into bamboo because of their “hot” excitable nature. As bamboo is believed to have been transformed from humans, bamboo is believed to have a soul but quite different from that of living Jehai who are expected to have a “cool” soul-substance versus the “hot” excitable soul of the bamboo.

CHAPTER 5

STATE POLICIES AND THE RIGHTS OF THE ORANG ASLI

The Communist Insurgency

As a result of the Communist Insurgency which began in 1948, the British established the Department of Aborigines in 1950, with the aim of depriving the Communist insurgents of the help of the Orang Asli who had been a source of food supplies, shelter, information, and assistance as trackers in the roadless forests of the central mountainous range of the Peninsula. After the initial failure of mass resettlement, the Department of Aborigines began building “forts” around which they tried to resettle the Orang Asli and to provide them with basic health and other amenities, but with very limited success.

The Aboriginal Peoples Act 1954

The Department, later renamed the Department of Orang Asli Affairs (JHEOA), through the Aboriginal Peoples Act, 1954 (revised, 1974), is empowered to create and regulate Orang Asli settlements, appoint and remove headmen, control entry into Orang Asli settlements, control the use of their lands and even the crops they grow. The Act destroys the indigenous rights of the people and removes the autonomy of the Orang Asli peoples, despite the stated aim of the JHEOA being “to create an individual, family and community of Orang Asli who are healthy and productive by a health system that is fair, easily accessible, disciplined and adaptive to change in

response to environment and customer’s expectation with every stratum besides encouraging individual responsibility and social participation towards improving the quality of life”. Nicholas (2000) points out that there is a fissure between the actual situation of the Orang Asli and the JHEOA goals, and that this fissure is the outcome of state ideology and the way the Orang Asli and the Orang Asli “problem” are perceived and administered. The Orang Asli are regarded as “wards of the state” and the JHEOA as their godparent. Nicholas (2000) points out that the Orang Asli are regarded as individual subjects who should be integrated into the main stream of Malay society. The Orang Asli are treated differently and separately, being the only people in Malaysia to have special legislation to separate them as wards of the state. They have never been recognised as an indigenous people with all the rights that are conventionally accorded to indigenous peoples by international custom (Nicholas and Baer, 2007).

The Fundamental Rights Of Indigenous Peoples

Subramaniam (2007) quoting from the principles of the fundamental rights of indigenous peoples elucidated by Dalee Sambo, mentions seven basic rights as follows. Firstly, the right to the recognition of the collective or communal nature of indigenous societies and their corresponding rights which are collective in nature. Secondly, the right of self-determination by virtue of which indigenous peoples may freely determine their political status and institutions and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development. Thirdly, states should be obliged to obtain the free and informed consent of indigenous peoples with regard to policies and decisions which affect these peoples. Fourthly, indigenous peoples should have the right to determine their own priorities in terms of economic, cultural, spiritual and political development. Fifthly, such development should be sustainable (not short term) and equitable (fair to all). Sixthly, indigenous peoples shall have the right to protection of the integrity of indigenous values, practices, institutions and environment. Seventhly, the right to be treated equally without negative discrimination.

The non-recognition of these indigenous rights is the underlying reason for the poor socio-economic status and the political weakness of the Orang Asli peoples. The official policy of re-groupment of the Orang Asli into settlements is often without sufficient understanding of the role of traditional culture particularly in relation to food supplies. Re-groupment often leads to

a narrowing of the subsistence base of the people since many more people must share the very limited resources available within reasonable distance of the settlement, with the result that food supplies are reduced due to the narrow subsistence base of the settlement. Khor (1994) pointed out that, in addition to the narrowing of the subsistence based, relocation of the Orang Asli entails cultural uprooting and lifestyle changes which may not be overcome by the provision of physical facilities and economic incentives.

Nicholas and Baer (2007) point out that resettlement is often not for the purpose of improving Orang Asli health or lifestyles, but for other reasons such as security, making way for public projects such as highways, dams, roads, airports, and even private projects such as resorts. The non recognition of the land rights of Orang Asli such as the nomadic Jehai, means that the extraction of timber is without the agreement of the Orang Asli. The extraction of timber from the traditional forested lands of Orang Asli leads to the destruction of the forests, the sedimentation of the streams and rivers, resulting in the destruction of the traditional sources of food of both plant and animal origin. Vast tracts of the pristine jungles of the Temenggor Forest have and continue to be logged, greatly reducing the subsistence base of the Jehai and other Orang Asli living in the Temenggor Forest. Zalilah and Tham (2002) point out that most Orang Asli lack food security and that the majority live below the poverty line. The Orang Asli, especially those dependent upon the forest are extremely vulnerable to the destruction of the ecosystem by others.

Zainal Abidin (2003) reports that the national poverty rate had been reduced to 6.5 per cent but the rate for Orang Asli remained at 76.9 per cent. The official statistics classified 35.2 per cent of Orang Asli as hardcore poor, compared to 12.4 per cent nationally. The Orang Asli, comprising 19 distinct people groups, numbered 149,512 in 2004, representing just 0.6 per cent of the population of Malaysia. Thus the Orang Asli peoples are not only marginalised but are also politically very weak.

CHAPTER 6

THE JEHAI REACH THE CROSS ROADS OF THEIR FUTURE

The Impact Of The Temenggor Dam And The East West Highway

Although much of Peninsular Malaysia became free of Communist insurgents after 1960, the traditional territories of the Jehai remained under the influence of the Communist insurgents up to 1989. In 1967, the construction of the Temenggor Dam was started and was completed in 1972. It began operations in 1975 and was officially opened in 1976. It has a maximum height of 127 meters and is 250 meters above sea level. Its length is 80 km and covers 152 sq. km of submerged land. As a result, standing dead trees are a prominent feature of the lake. There are 80 hill tops turned into islands when the land was submerged by the lake. These infertile hill tops today constitute the lands on which the Jehai are forced to eke out a living. The Government constructed the East West Highway in the 1970's linking Grik in Northern Perak to Jeli in Kelantan, with the Highway bisecting the traditional territories of the Jehai into two, the Belum Forest in the North and the Temenggor Forest in the South. In 1971, a major Communist ambush resulted in the death of several soldiers and workers of the highway. The risk of ambushes only dramatically decreased after the Communist Party of Malaya officially laid down their arms in 1989. The building of the Temenggor Dam and the flooding of the upper Perak River was a key factor in cutting off the infiltration route of the Communist insurgents from the Betong salient in Thailand into Peninsular Malaysia. But the impact of the building of the dam upon the survival of the Jehai has been significant.

With 152 sq.km of the Belum and Temenggor Forest drowned by the dam, the Jehai and their Temiar neighbours, were greatly affected. Much of the fertile valleys of the riverine system lay under water, leaving mountainous tops in and around the manmade lake. The Perak River supports about 125 species of fish. However, because there are very few natural lakes in Malaysia, there are very few fish species that have adapted to this habitat. Hence, the Temenggor Lake is dominated by five species of fish, namely Toman (*Channa micropeltes*), Kelah (*Tor tambroides*), Baung (*Mystus nigriceps*), Sebarau (*Hampala macrolepidota*) and Bujuk (*Channa lucius*). The Jehai lament that despite the large volume of water in the Temenggor Lake, there are relatively few fish compared with the fresh water streams and rivers of the riverine system above the level of the dam waters, such as the Singor River and the Kejar River that flow into the Temenggor Lake. Aquaculture of these fish has not been successful. The introduction of non-native fish into the Temenggor Lake is strictly prohibited by law.



Figure 6.1 The East West Highway traverses the Temenggor Lake at Banding Island.



Figure 6.2 The manmade Temenggor Lake drowned 152 sq.km of the traditional territories of the Jehai.

The Displacement Of The Jehai

With the submergence of the riverine areas, 266 Orang Asli families with an estimated 1000 individuals of mainly Jehai and Temiar ethnicity along with small numbers of Lanoh and Semai were displaced. The dam also affected 124 Malay families who were resettled in Kampong Air Ganda in Grik separately from the Orang Asli. 13 Jehai communities were regrouped in the Pulau Tujuh Resettlement Scheme in the mid 1970s. This was mainly for security reasons as a military strategy to isolate the Jehai from the Communist insurgents. In 1979, it became obvious that the Pulau Tujuh Resettlement Scheme was a poor choice as it would become submerged by the rising water as the Lake began to fill. The people were forced to move to the Regroupment Scheme at Air Banun. Nicholas (2000) points out that just a few months after the people were regrouped at Air Banun, some of the scheme participants began to withdraw when traditional sources of food within the area began to be depleted due to the much higher population density. Government food rations and later cash subsidies of RM 50 per family per month was insufficient to sustain the Jehai, who had to resort to selling rattan for cash and catching fish in the lake which was two kilometres away. The death of 18 Jehai, within a short period of being regrouped, accelerated the departure of more groups of Jehai. Conflicts over land contributed further to withdrawals.

Nomadic Jehai have been territorial and move as camp communities, each headed by a headman. Each camp community claims a specific area marked by specific landscape features such as hills, rivers, streams, waterfalls, certain trees and landmarks and each territory is mutually recognised by its neighbouring camp community. Membership in any camp community can be quite flexible as members move from one camp to another, often to reinforce bonds between relatives. Nevertheless the territorial boundaries of each Jehai camp community is recognised by the Jehai. Hence when 13 Jehai camp communities were thrown into one area, it was counter to the Jehai understanding of territorial rules established in the past not only to preserve peace but also to ensure that forest resources are sufficient for the needs of each Jehai camp community.

It was mentioned earlier that at one stage there were 13 distinct Jehai communities each led by its own headman (*penghulu*) technically under the Air Banun Resettlement Scheme. By 1993, only the group who claimed traditional territorial rights to this part of the Belum were left residing in the 2,529.2 hectares of the Air Banun Resettlement Scheme. The rest had dispersed into the surrounding forests to the remains of their traditional territorial areas.

The Air Banun Resettlement Scheme caused a great deal of disappointment to the Jehai. Promises of agricultural projects such as rubber plantations and fruit trees were not forthcoming, not even 20 years later. Since Jehai are not used to deferred rewards, they were very much disillusioned by the failed promises. Further the soil at Air Banun was found to be unsuitable for agricultural projects. To add to the already bad situation, the employment of incompetent contractors, who did not complete the task contracted to them, led to even great frustration. The participants of the scheme also complained that although houses were promised to the 176 households, only eighteen had been built by 1993, and out of these twelve were for the JHEOA administrative staff. To add to the disappointment of participants, regroupment schemes do not give additional security of tenure to the land. Consequently, the several groups of Jehai that had withdrawn from the Air Banun Resettlement Scheme felt that they had much more to lose by participating in any future regroupment schemes.

CHAPTER 7

A DISILLUSIONED PEOPLE AND THE HAND OF GOD

The Loss Of The Fertile Valleys Of The Displaced Jehai

Many of the disillusioned Jehai camp communities turned their backs on the Regroupment Scheme Air Banun, and sought to re-establish a life in the forest now permanently changed by the flooding of their most fertile lands where animal and plant life was most plentiful. In the fertile valleys of the Belum and Temenggor Forest, there are at least 274 species of birds, over 100 species of mammals including squirrels, mouse deer, gibbons and the Malayan tapir, over 3000 species of flowering plants, 46 species of palms, and 64 species of ferns, 62 species of mosses and over 30 species of ginger. On the mountain tops, the variety is much lower and the soil is relatively infertile. After the flooding, the displaced Jehai have been left just the mountain tops of their once vast fertile valley systems.

Several camp communities sought shelter on what were once mountain tops, the remains of their flooded territorial hunting grounds. Food was much more difficult to find in these relatively infertile mountain tops. Invasion into the fertile valleys of other camp communities was not possible without causing conflict. Children began to die from insufficient food, and mortality among the Jehai, which already was the highest among all Orang Asli, began to rise, particularly among children.

Hunger, Disease And Death Stalk The Displaced Jehai

Gomes (1990) estimated that the Jehai crude death rate for 1956-1979 was 3.3 per 100 Jehai per year and that for the period 1978-1988 the crude death rate had risen to 4.5 per 100 Jehai per year, which is the highest recorded for any Orang Asli group in Malaysia. In contrast the crude death rate for Malaysia in 1970 was 0.7 per cent and for 1980 was 0.5 per cent (putting the Jehai rate at nine times greater than the overall rate for the nation). In a later chapter, we will describe in detail the results of a medical survey of diseases that the Jehai in such communities suffer. Suffice for the moment to say that the Jehai faced exceedingly high death rates mainly out of insufficient food supplies concurrent with a high prevalence of many serious diseases such as malaria, diarrhoea, intestinal parasites and high maternal mortality.

One can only imagine the pain and horror of hunger and disease among the Jehai as the shadow of suffering hovered over the displaced Jehai perched on infertile mountain tops, with their backs turned in determination away from the sorrow, conflict and death that the regroupment experience has seared into the hearts and minds of the Jehai. The cry of hungry children mixed with the cry of grieving families as children, mothers and even men died from hunger and disease seared through the hearts of the camp headmen.



Figure 7.1 Hunger, disease and death affected the Jehai displaced by the Communist Insurgency and the manmade Temenggor Lake.

The Despair Of The Displaced Jehai

The suffering of the displaced Jehai, remained unknown to the rest of the nation. Not only would the Communist insurgents continue to be active in the traditional territories of the Jehai, a 24-hour curfew kept all unauthorized outsiders away from much of the Jehai territories ensuring that the suffering of the Jehai remained unknown to others. This veil continued until the Haatyai Accord of 1989, when the Communist insurgents laid down their arms. Despite this, the area north of the East West Highway has remained under a 24-hour curfew even up to the time of writing this book 20 years after the Communist insurgency ended, ensuring that practically no information concerning the Jehai was known by the public at large. The Aboriginal Peoples Act of 1954 (revised 1974) controls non-Orang Asli contact with Orang Asli, and specifically prohibits non-Orang Asli from staying overnight among Orang Asli, further ensuring that the condition of the Jehai remained unknown to the general public of Malaysia. Consequently the needs and suffering of the Jehai remained hidden in the Belum and Temenggor Forest even after the Communist insurgents had laid down their arms.

The Hand Of God

With their hearts stirred by hunger, pain, frustration, anger, sorrow and grief, the Jehai headmen and people had no other recourse but to cry to the heavens. “O Lord, have mercy upon us and answer our cry of despair.” A cry repeated for many years by the people.

As the psalmist says in Psalm 5:1 “Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my meditation. Give heed to the voice of my cry, my King and my God, for to You I will pray. My voice You shall hear in the morning, O lord; in the morning I will direct it to You, and I will look up. For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness, nor shall evil dwell with You.” Without a doubt, God must have answered as in Exodus 3:9 “Now therefore behold, the cry of the children.....has come to Me.”

Even though Christians were unaware of the suffering of the Negrito especially the Jehai, Christian communities in Malaysia, had for many years been praying for the Orang Asli in general and some specifically for the Negrito cluster of Orang Asli including the Jehai. In August 1994, one group of seven Christians led by Pastor Jean Lim embarked on a prayer drive around the whole of Peninsular Malaysia. As the group drove on the East

West Highway from Grik to Jeli through the traditional territories of the Jehai Dr Chen Siew Tin and the team prayed to God for the salvation of the Jehai and that we will be able to touch the lives of the Jehai. When we pray we often become the answer to that prayer.

A Vision From God

On 5th January 2000, the prayer group of the River of Life Sanctuary received a vision. The vision was of “a dark skinned people with woolly hair, who were very poor, poorly clothed, who lived in the interior of an isolated forest, and who depended upon the forest for food. They were an “abandoned” (displaced) people who were seeking for God. They lived in a forest through which passed one single road and the people used “boats”(bamboo rafts). The area was in the District of Grik (Hulu Perak). God’s desire was that the church was to adopt the people and show them the love of God in practical ways including providing them with medical care. Signs and wonders would accompany the work and many would be healed and there would be much success. The people have a name.”

Who Are These people?

As the head of missions, the writer was tasked with identifying these people of whom God was showing to the prayer group. From the specifics of the vision, the following identity features were apparent. Firstly, the people were dark skinned, woolly haired, poorly dressed and were forest dwellers, indicating that these were from the Semang or Negrito cluster of the Orang Asli. Secondly, Grik District being officially named Hulu Perak included the traditional territories of the Kensiu, Kintaq, Lanoh and Jehai. Of these four Negrito only one was located in an area with a large body of water where bamboo rafts are in use, namely the Temenggor Lake that sits on the traditional territory of the Jehai, who had been displaced by the manmade lake in the 1970s. What was so amazing to our minds was that God left no doubt as to who He had in mind when He gave the vision to go and adopt these people.

Where Are The Jehai?

Having been associated with Dr Bolton in the Aboriginal Hospital in Gombak in the 1970s, it became very clear that the Jehai were hunter gatherers living in the Belum and Temenggor Forests and that so far as we were aware, most remained as hunter gatherers deep in these forests. The only group of Jehai that had settled were located in the Regroupment Scheme Air Banun, and some had converted to Islam. The Regroupment Scheme enforced a no contact policy regarding non-Orang Asli hence it was virtually out of bounds to non-Orang Asli.

How were we to find the deep forest Jehai hunter gatherers? The Belum Forest remained under a 24-hour curfew, hence our search would have to be for the Jehai in the forests of the Temenggor area south of the East West Highway. Prayer would have to be our key means to locate them. From January to August 2000, the team prayed fervently for a lead on how we can contact these forest dwellers. Enquiries of Christian groups and churches in Perak and elsewhere showed that there was contact with Orang Asli but there were no contacts with the Negrito and certainly not with the Jehai. There was information that small transient camps of the Jehai may be chanced upon along the shoreline of the Temenggor Lake and that these camps were mobile and are hard to locate.

We prayed for guidance for seven months from January to August 2000. In August 2000, we felt led to go ahead and look for the Jehai on the shores of the Temenggor Lake. On 11th August 2000, the team drove to Grik and that night prayed fervently for God to speak to the Jehai headmen and people in visions and dreams that we were coming to touch their lives and to bring the gospel to set them free. Early the next morning, we drove to Banding Island Resort and hired a boat with the instructions to the boatman to look for any Jehai camps on the shoreline of the Temenggor Lake. The boatman warned us that it would be very difficult to locate the Jehai. After driving for 50 minutes towards the south, the boatman pointed to a small village and announced, “Temiar village”. Somewhat disappointed, we reminded him that our purpose was to visit the Jehai, to which he replied that time was running out and that after visiting the Temiar village we would need to begin to return to Banding Island Resort.

A Jehai Camp Community Called Tebang

When the boat touched the shore, we headed to the village and before us stood a solitary man of short stature with dark skin, woolly hair and holding a blowpipe in his hand. We asked him, “Where are the Jehai?.” He replied, “I am Jehai. I am Semerengnoi, Jehai *Penghulu* (appointed headman by JHEOA) of Tebang Village”, a Jehai village. Enquiries showed that the people had recently moved in and that the village had been set up a few weeks earlier. There were several new houses under construction. He showed no recognition of any of the visitors or the boatman, confirming that contact with the outside world was infrequent and that the group had arrived just a few weeks earlier.



Figure 7.2 The first Jehai we met was Headman Semerengnoi Kemlin, here seen holding his blowpipe. Tied to his waist is his bamboo quiver of poison darts.

Signs And Wonders Will Accompany The Work

Communicating in the lingua franca, Malay, we quickly noted that they had planted some tapioca, but these would not yield any food for a further six months. There were no other agricultural food crops. The headman told us that they intended to stay at this site for as long as food supplies were available. They were aware that the surrounding forest was unable to support their group adequately. There were very few animals and wild fruits. Some of the women said that they had not had any food for days. The men had gone hunting and had not returned, but the forest was bare of much food and often the men returned with nothing to show for their day long excursion into the surrounding forest. We noticed that the children were very quiet and almost silent from hunger. Obviously there was a shortage of food.

We had brought gifts of food and passed these to the headman. As we conversed in Malay with Semerengnoi Kemlin, and developed a rapport with him, he mentioned that he had had a strange dream the night before. In his dream he had seen five beautiful colours, namely yellow, black, red, white and green, and he asked us what we thought of the strange dream he had had. We were amazed that in his dream, he had seen the “Five Gospel Colours” and set to explain to him the meaning of the five gospel colours. To the writer’s utter amazement, he then said, “I know that God has sent you to my people and I”.

We took the opportunity to share on Jesus as God and Saviour, and Semerengnoi Kemlin decided to accept Jesus as his Saviour. His wife, their niece and two adult women, also received Jesus as their Saviour. For years these long suffering Jehai had been crying in their hearts in despair for God to lift them out of this hunger and sorrow. Later towards the end of his life, we were to find out that in his heart Semerengnoi knew that this strange dream and the arrival of kind gentle hearted people could be the beginning of the answer to the cry of his heart. In the course of many years of happy relationship with him, we found out that Semerengnoi and the Jehai were fully aware that some Jehai in Air Banun had become Muslims, but he and his people resisted any effort to change their traditional beliefs. The Jehai had also heard vague information of a loving God but no one had ever explained anything about Jesus to him or his people. His acceptance of Jesus was the culmination of years of waiting that ended in a trigger dream and its interpretation.

We were under no illusion that much work lay ahead of this initial contact which was a spark in the darkness, before the spark would turn into a light of change.

Semerengnoi mentioned that there were three very seriously ill children who needed medical help. When Dr Chen Siew Tin, a paediatrician, examined the children, we realised that all three were severely ill with bronchopneumonia. One child was so severely ill that she was gasping for air and her thin chest wall was being sucked in with each breath. We knew that without help this child would soon die. Another was being nursed by his teenaged mother, who really had no idea how to look after her very sick child whose eyelids were glued together by a thick layer of pus. The third child was much in the same severe condition. After cleaning the eyes of the child whose eyelids were glued together by a thick layer of pus, we gave all three children oral antibiotics and offered to help the parents bring them to Grik Hospital. The answer was a firm, “No! Not the hospital”. Despite the severity of the illnesses, we agreed to their firm stand. So we prayed that Jesus would heal the three severely ill children. We needed a miracle because from past experience, such severely ill children without oxygen and intensive care, had little hope of surviving. On our next visit, we were most pleasantly overjoyed to see that all three children had not only survived but were healthy and running around. We recalled that in the vision God had revealed to us, He had promised that “signs and wonders would accompany the work and many would be healed and there would be much success.”



Figure 7.3 One of three seriously ill Jehai children who were suffering from bronchopneumonia, being treated by Dr Chen Siew Tin. All three children recovered despite the severity of their illnesses.

The sincere acceptance of Jesus as God and Saviour by Semerengnoi who was headman, opened doors and a strange phenomenon took place in Tebang. On our subsequent visits we noted that the number of houses in Tebang increased as more Jehai arrived to join the group in Tebang. A few months later, the JHEOA put up a large blue coloured sign board naming the village officially as Kampung Tebang. On our second visit, eight adult Jehai men and five adult women, eagerly listened to the simple salvation message about Jesus and without any hesitation said that they too wanted to have Jesus as their Saviour. By December 2000, four months after our first contact, 19 adult men and 14 adult women in Tebang, had without any hesitation accepted Jesus as their personal Saviour.

Meanwhile, at each visit the Jehai were being taught simple scripture songs often to the accompaniment of clapping and action to express joy and praise. The Jehai love music and took to the scripture songs with enthusiasm. At each visit, through role play and simple teaching, the Jehai were discovering in greater depth the gospel.

The story that they loved most was the story of creation and how God made the sun, moon, day and night, the waters and the land, the forests and the plants, the animals and the birds. Headman Semerengnoi was greatly pleased and always warmly welcomed the team. The headman and Jehai of Tebang, soon knew us by name and we likewise called everyone by their name. At every visit, we headed for the house of Semerengnoi to pay our respects before we did anything. We always bid him farewell before we left the village. Gifts of rice and food was always left in his care for him to distribute to his people.

We Find Another Jehai Camp Community Called Cuweh

As we prepared to leave the village after our first visit on 12th August 2000, we bid goodbye to Semerengnoi and the Jehai and asked for permission to return, which they gladly agreed to. As we headed north toward Banding Island Resort, the boatman stopped at a small temporary collection of huts. These turned out to be temporary camp of another group of Jehai, headed by Charang Kiroi, but he was away. There were four small lean-to huts of thatch and the women told us that they had arrived a week earlier but intended to stay for as long as they could obtain food from the surrounding forest. By then it was getting late and one adult man arrived back from his hunting and gathering excursion but he returned empty handed having found neither animal nor plant food. Not even a small squirrel or bird, nor even a single fruit

or root. That night the family would have to go without any food. This Jehai village is called Cuweh. Later we found out that Charang was the head of one of the Jehai camp communities that had withdrawn from the Regroupment Scheme Air Banun over 20 years earlier and had resisted any effort to change their traditional beliefs. There is an island named Pulau Kiroi in the Temenggor Lake. It served for some years as the camp of Charang's father, Headman Kiroi. Charang's camp had moved over a number of locations and he had just decided to come to this new camp site a few days earlier.



Figure 7.4 A band of semi-nomadic Jehai in their lean-to hut. The family had just arrived in Cuweh about a week earlier.

On our next visit, Headman Charang's hunting dog greeted us with loud barking but the dog was reassured by Charang. As the writer walked toward the headman and greeted him by calling his name, he was surprised and asked the writer how the writer came to know his name and to identify that he was the headman. I told him the truth that I had enquired from other Jehai and having obtained his name had come to greet him and to visit him. On entering the camp, I had perceived from his dignified stance that he was the headman. I then introduced myself and informed him that I am a medical doctor. We brought along with us gifts of food which we gave to him to distribute to his camp community according to Jehai custom. As we conversed with him in a gentle tone, he showed his appreciation by welcoming us warmly to the village.

When we first introduced Jesus Christ to him, he was curious and extremely cautious. He asked many questions and laughingly told us to explain very carefully and slowly, saying "You should explain this to me as if I am a child of six years of age." After having answered his questions and satisfied his curiosity, Headman Charang said, "Yes, I want to accept Jesus as my Saviour". He was soon followed by the adult men and women. By the end of December 2000, four months after our initial contact with the Jehai of Kampung Cuweh, headed by Charang, 13 adult men and eight adult women in the village had accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. To ensure that all the Jehai fully understood who Jesus Christ was, we would continue to teach the Jehai for a total of nine months before we began to water baptize them all on 12th and 13th May 2001.

This small temporary camp of four small lean-to huts was rapidly replaced by better built houses as more people began to arrive in Cuweh. In February 2001, six months later, the JHEOA arrived in Cuweh and took a census. By March 2001, seven months after the camp was established, the JHEOA had erected a large blue sign proclaiming the village as Kampung Cuweh, under the Regroupment Scheme Air Banun.

We Find A Third Jehai Camp Community Called Bush

On our very first trip on 12th August 2000, we had been led by the boatman to Tebang and had met Headman Semerengnoi. On that same evening on our way back to Banding Island, we had been shown the camp of the recently arrived people from Headman Charang's camp community. On our second trip, we decided to rent our boat from Mohamed Shah, as the cost was lower and unlike the Banding Resort, Mohamed Shah promised us that he always had boatmen available, some of whom were Orang Asli. We found that despite the fact that all the regular Malay boatmen had been booked and were unavailable, Mohamed Shah, true to his promise could let us have an Orang Asli boatman. As the team took off on our second trip into Jehai territory, the Orang Asli boatman headed for Tebang, the Jehai village of Headman Semerengnoi. Just as Tebang village came into view in the horizon, the Orang Asli boatman turned left and headed for a small finger of open water on the lake and amid protests, which he completely ignored, we suddenly saw on the shoreline another village. Within a few minutes, the boat had hit the shore and the team were scrambling up the small hill, the top of another mountain, below which lay the submerged fertile valleys of the Perak River. Perched on this hill top, was the third Jehai village, which turned out

to be the home of our Orang Asli boatman, Arau Begrek, who himself was a Jehai. We were amazed that we had been led to the third Jehai village without even asking the boatman to do so.

The Jehai villagers had seen us approaching and looked at us with keen but a detached look of suspicion as we were clearly non-Jehai. There were about 17 children and two old women, perched on a small hill of bare earth. The Jehai women and children showed no sign of welcome. Instead they looked at us with deep suspicion as if they would prefer to avoid us. Arau secured the boat and came up behind us but made no attempt to say anything. We smiled, waved at them and took out some gifts and slowly approached the women and children, who looked as if they were ready to flee into the nearby forest if we so much as shouted or ran toward them. It was important that a woman should reach out to this group of women and children. As Dr Chen Siew Tin and Joshua Prakash, our anchor man, carefully moved forward, no woman or child moved, until they reached the group and one little girl of about 5 years of age, stood up and took the beautiful pink dress offered to her. Slowly others came forward and gifts were handed out followed by food. After a while, younger women and men began to materialise from various houses and the forest. A few moments later, the headman, Kasout Menong



Figure 7.5 The Jehai distrust outsiders. They look on with suspicion while Dr Chen Siew Tin and Joshua Prakash carefully approach the Jehai and offer a dress to a girl.

arrived and introduced himself. Kasout told us that the group had arrived about a month earlier and that they intended to stay in the area for as long as was possible. Tapioca had been planted but could not be harvested for another six months. We found that many houses were under construction out of small tree trunks, bamboo and thatch. This village headed by Kasout was called Kampung Bush.

Some of the women told us that food was very scarce and that they had not eaten for several days. We had brought several bags of rice and these were very much welcomed. A sick child was brought to us for treatment. After treatment, we offered to pray for the child, and this was gratefully accepted opening a window to explain about Jesus. This opened an opportunity for us to introduce Jesus to the Jehai. Kasout Menong warmly agreed to our request for permission to return to visit them on our next visit to the Temenggor Forest.

After considerable time spent exchanging small talk, we were able to begin to develop increasing rapport with Headman Kasout and the Jehai men and women. Here was another camp community of Jehai who had also withdrawn from the Regroupment Scheme Air Banun and retained their traditional beliefs for over 20 years despite pressure to change them. As we carefully introduced Jesus Christ to the Jehai in Kampung Bush, they listened with great interest. By the end of December 2000, some three months after our first contact with Headman Kasout and the Jehai of Kampung Bush, Headman Kasout together with 15 adult men and 16 adult Jehai women had each eagerly accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. Without doubt, our “cool” manners and non-aggressive approach that never forced our views upon the Jehai was a key factor in the Jehai finding a kinship spirit that laid the ground work for their relatively quick response to explanations about Jesus Christ as a God and Saviour.

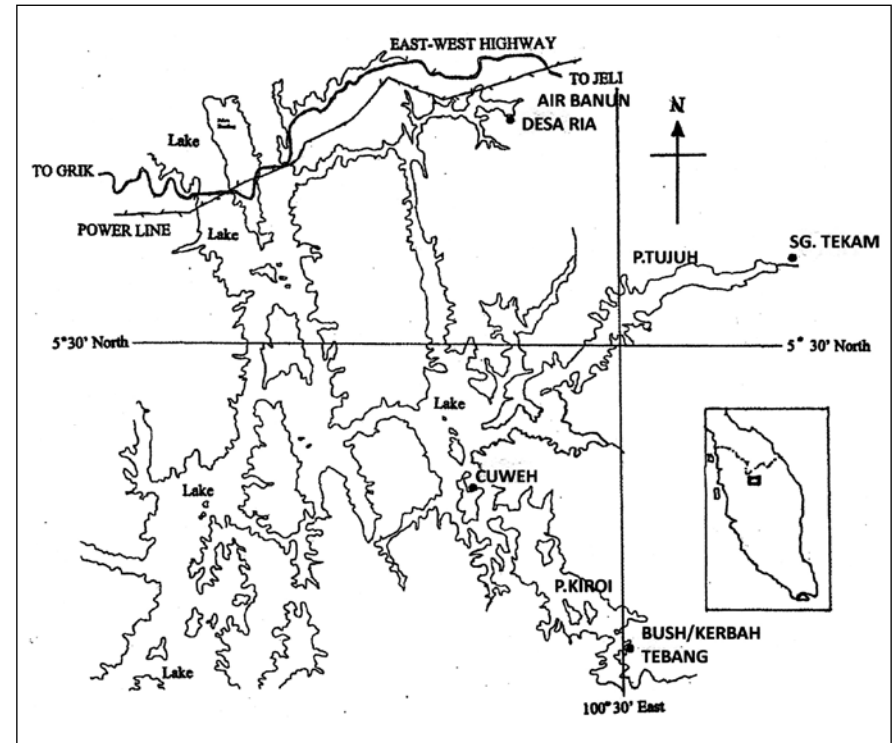
Kampung Bush, after a number of years would relocate itself to a site where there is a stream which formed a good source of clean water and would be renamed as Kampung Kerbah.

Like the rest of the Jehai in Tabang and Cuweh, we would continue to teach the people of Kampung Bush about the gospel over some nine months. In May 2001, we would water baptize them, having noted that the adult Jehai men and women had without hesitation confirmed that they wanted to be water baptised as a public show of their acceptance of Jesus Christ as their God and Saviour.

Within two visits we had located three Jehai camp communities. On our third visit to the Temenggor Forest, we rented a boat from Mohamed Shah

who provided us with another Orang Asli boatman. We were on our way to visit the three Jehai villages we had found, namely Kampung Tebang, headed by Semerengnoi, Kampung Chuweh, headed by Charang Kiroi and Kampung Bush, headed by Kasout Menong.

On our third visit to the Jehai, the boatman without any warning, suddenly took a turn into another open finger of the lake and led us to the fourth Jehai village, Cuweh Anjang, headed by Anjang Adik. It was a subgroup of the camp community headed by Charang Kiroi. Thus, it was amazing and obviously the hand of God that had so quickly led the team, within three visits to the Temenggong Forest, to four Jehai camp communities, with a total population of about 160 Jehai. As time went on, these four Jehai camp communities grew in size both from natural growth through the addition of many children, and from migration of Jehai from other jungle camp communities to swell the population to about 400 people. We would later in May 2001, come across another camp community headed by Kawah Charang which we named as Cuweh Kawah. All the three camp communities named Cuweh, Cuweh Anjang & Cuweh Kawah, originally was one camp community headed by Charang. However due to the small subsistence base, the camp had to be divided into three component camps in order to ease the hardship of inadequate food supplies due to the small subsistence base of the original camp community. After the death of Headman Charang, the three camp communities regrouped into two, with one headed by Headman Kawah Charang and the other by Anjang Adik.



Map 2. Map of the Temenggong Forest showing the location of Air Banun, Desa Ria, Pulau Tujuh, Sungai Tekam, Cuweh, Pulau Kiroi, Bush/Kerba and Tebang.

We Are Placed Under Surveillance By The Authorities.

By December 2000, about five months after our initial contact with the Jehai, we heard on Radio Malaysia that the authorities had started to keep a surveillance upon our work among the Jehai. We were aware that government authorities would maintain a keen eye upon us for several years to come. We decided that we would continue to touch the lives of the Jehai and that we would take every precaution to abide strictly to the law so that the work would not be put in jeopardy. The importance of caution is highly critical so as not to jeopardise any evangelistic work among unreached peoples.

The police had absolutely no difficulty keeping surveillance over us, as the Jehai are required to inform the authorities of the visits of all non-Orang Asli to their villages. The law provides that non-Orang Asli may visit during daylight hours but they must leave by dusk. The law also permits tourists and visitors to move freely over the Temenggong Lake south of the East West Highway. However the Belum Forest which is north of the Highway, has been



Figure 7.6 The Jehai village of Cuweh Anjang under the leadership of Headman Anjang Adik, is perched on a narrow strip of hard bare soil that was formerly a mountain top. It is hard to grow any vegetables or food crops near the houses.

under a 24 hour curfew during the Communist insurgency, and continues to be under a 24 hour curfew 20 years later even though the Communist insurgency ended in 1989.

As we always informed each Jehai headmen of the date of our next visit, this information was available to the authorities who often were waiting for us at the jetty. The police were polite and at the most would enquire where we were going. They never interfered even though they were fully aware of our work. On one occasion when the engine of our outboard motor stalled, the marine police enquired if they could be of any help and waited for our motor to restart before they sped away.

We took the precaution of never giving the Jehai any cash in case it was deemed to be a bribe to entice them to Christianity. However, the authorities were fully aware that we provided the Jehai with food supplies, seeds, fruit plant cultivars, agricultural implements, long knives for clearing the bushes, hoes and other agricultural tools, nails, saws, hammers and zinc sheets to build their houses and community hall, pipes and pumps for raising water to their homes, kettles, school books, school bags, clothes, shoes, toiletries, educational learning materials readily available in any bookstore, charts on biology, mathematics, pictorial teaching materials, and other useful implements to increase their ability to grow food, build their houses and to be able to read and write.

On 17th January 2001, as the team headed for the Jehai village of Cuweh, Azam Charang our boatman, told the team leader Dr ST Chen that a Jehai leader, Lepai, from Air Banun, who was the representative of the several camp communities in the Temenggor Forest, was waiting to meet the team. Lepai asked many questions as to what the team was doing among the Jehai and implied that we should get his permission before we enter the area. He introduced himself as a retired medical assistant who had spent time serving in the Gombak Aboriginal Hospital in the out skirts of Kuala Lumpur. He demanded to know what we were doing among the Jehai. Without hesitation Dr. ST Chen told him the truth that we were helping the Jehai by providing medical care for the sick and helping them learn about healthy living, how to grow more food, how to read and write and that we were bringing the love of Jesus Christ the God of Peace and Love.

He looked at what we had brought and found three durian D24 plants, two bud grafted rambutan plants, lots of durian seeds and rambutan seeds, clothes, 10 kg of rice, and biscuits. He realised that the team had doctors, medicines, health education materials, agricultural implements, seeds, young



Figure 7.7 Lepai, the Representative of the Orang Asli of the Temenggor Forest, meets us and is pleased that we have brought durian and rambutan fruit plants, rice, biscuits and medicines for the Jehai people.

fruit plants, school educational materials, and nails for building houses, house building implements and gifts of food.

Lepai realised that the leader was a medical doctor. After questioning the team for a while and after he had introduced himself, he announced that he personally welcomed us to visit the Jehai. However he would call a meeting of the Jehai headmen of Tebang, Cuweh, and Kerbah and would consult them as to whether they wanted us to continue to visit the Jehai villages. The next day he met with all the three headmen, who without hesitation stood their ground that our team from Kuala Lumpur must be allowed to return to help them. They were very clear that the team had asked for nothing in exchange for their work of love. The headmen also argued that the team had been kind, gentle and had consistently kept its promises and were reliable.

On our next visit, we were informed that all the headmen had unanimously affirmed that the Christians from Kuala Lumpur headed by Dr. P.Chen must continue to help the Jehai. Some years later, on his death bed, Headman Semerengnoi gave instructions to his deputy headman, Kalwin Karol, and among the several instructions he asked Kalwin to allow the Christian team from Kuala Lumpur to continue to help the people especially in teaching the people. He instructed Kalwin to encourage the children to learn from the Christians.

CHAPTER 8

ADOPTING THE JEHAI PEOPLE

Why Adopt The Jehai?

The common practice of most Christian groups and churches is to visit Orang Asli communities perhaps several times each year. Each visit is a celebration of sorts with a large team of Christians of various ages excitedly ministering to the Orang Asli children and adults for perhaps a half day, after which fond farewells are said amid promises of “We will see you in four months times during our next school vacation.” So why don’t we do just that? Why did God in His vision to the prayer group speak of adopting the people group He was concerned with? How long is this effort going to last? How much commitment will this entail?

From the earlier discussion of the plight of the displaced Jehai, it would be clear that the needs of the Jehai are broad and concern several aspects of their daily lives such as the need for food security, clothes, for medical care especially the prevention of disease, safe water supply and the proper disposal of waste, ability to read and write, nurturing of their identity as a people group, and their spiritual health, which the Jehai describe as a state of “coolness”.



Figure 8.1 The Jehai need food security, clothes, medical care, a safe water supply, literacy, and social development.

Is This Not The Job Of The JHEOA?

As outlined earlier, so far as the displaced Jehai were concerned, the JHEOA had failed to keep its promise of assisting the Jehai after the Jehai had been displaced out of their fertile valleys that were drowned by the waters of the manmade lake. After two failed regroupment efforts, most of the Jehai had withdrawn from the Regroupment Scheme Air Banun, and tried to resume a lifestyle of dependence upon the forest but despair has been their reward and now some 25 years later, life remained precarious amidst hunger, disease and death under the looming threat of massive logging of their traditional territories.

Matthew 25:34-40 “Then the King will say to those on His right hand, “Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me a drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.” Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, “Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You; or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in; or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You? And the King will answer and say to them, “Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.”

What Is Meant By Adopting The Jehai?

To be adopted means to be a member of the family into which one has been adopted. Thus if a child is adopted by a family, that adopted child becomes a member of the family and is fed, clothed, taught, protected and will grow up in the family until she is able to look after herself. This will take many years and is not the same as when a child, who is in an orphanage, is visited once every four months.

The vision that we received from God was very clear in that it specified that we are to adopt the people described. It was to be a long term commitment to touch the lives of the Jehai so that the love of God for the Jehai will be perceived by the Jehai through those mandated to fulfil God's desire for the Jehai. It required that we were to touch every aspect of their lives with the love of God.

We will describe the long term work among the Jehai of the Temenggor Forest in terms of their need for food security, their need for clothes, their need for medical care and the prevention of disease, their need for safe water supplies and the proper disposal of waste, their need to learn how to read and write, their need to retain their identity as a people group, and their need for spiritual health.

Communicating With The Jehai

One of the first requirements we would face would be the challenge of communicating with the Jehai. Did any of us speak Jehai? Obviously not! Then how were we to go about communicating with a semi-nomadic tribe that had lived in the deep forest for centuries and even until recently had had minimal contact with the outside world partly due to the isolation imposed by both the Communist insurgency but more so by the policy of the JHEOA and the Aboriginal Peoples Acts 1954 to control the contact of Orang Asli with non-Orang Asli.

The Jehai are a distinct socio-linguistic group with its own language, a Mon-Khmer language. To the south of the traditional territories of the Jehai, live another Orang Asli group, the Temiar who are not of the Negrito cluster of Orang Asli, but are members of the Senoi cluster of Orang Asli, with its own distinct language. Many of the Jehai of the Temenggor Forest, from the frequent contact that they have with their Temiar neighbours, can therefore speak not only Jehai but also Temiar. Further, there has been some inter-marriage between the Jehai and the Temiar.

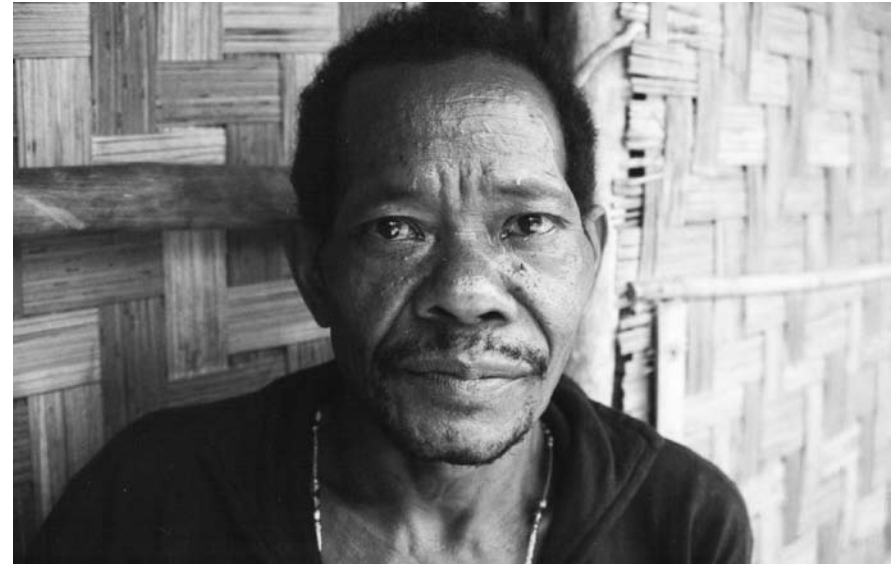


Figure 8.2 Headman Semerengnoi Kemlin of Tebang and many of the Jehai are able to communicate in Jehai, Temiar and Malay.

The Jehai leaders and most of the Jehai men can speak Malay, the lingua franca used in contacts with outsiders, JHEOA officials, Malay policemen, and government administrators. Malay, as a lingua franca, is also understood and used by most of the Jehai perhaps with the exception of older Jehai women. In their contacts with the outsiders, the Jehai headmen as well as many of the younger Jehai men who seek the occasional job as boatmen for Mohamed Shah and owners of boats, tourist agents and other outsiders are quite fluent in the lingua franca.

From the very first contact we had with Headman Semerengnoi Kemlin, we realised that until we could master the Jehai language, we would be able to use Malay, in the form of a lingua franca, as our principal mode of communication with relative ease. We noted that the Malay vocabulary of the Jehai was sufficient to permit easy communication in all matters concerning daily life. However none of the adults could read or write Malay in its official form.

We also observed that although most of the Jehai had not been to school, a few had been attending the government Primary School at Air Banun, where boarding facilities were available. For example out of about 25 school aged children in Kampung Tebang, only four children were regularly attending primary school as boarders, namely a girl in Primary Six, two boys in Primary Two and one in Primary One.

CHAPTER 9

DEVELOPING TRUST AND RAPPORT WITH THE JEHAJ

The Need To Develop The Trust Of The Jehai

It has been pointed out in an earlier section that outsiders (non-Orang Asli) are perceived to be more prone to “hot” emotions and much more to be avoided for the risk of being emotionally aroused through mixing of soul-substance mists of “hot” emotions from outsiders. Behaviour which is viewed by the Jehai as “hot” and provocative or causing a sense of the loss of self autonomy provokes a reaction of avoidance or withdrawal.

At the time of our initial contact with the Jehai in 2000, the past experience of the Jehai with the paternalistic attitude of government officials particularly from JHEOA, and the empty promises made by its officials, had left a deep sense of disillusionment and had resulted in the withdrawal of 12 of the Jehai camp communities from the Regroupment Scheme Air Banun into the forest. How were we going to overcome the distrust of outsiders by the Jehai?

Early on, at the very start of our contact with the Jehai, Pastor Silvanus Tan of Lengkap, who had served among the Semai for many years, advised the writer that the Orang Asli would watch every word we spoke and everything we did or promised to do, and would decide if we can be trusted and relied upon. We realized that if our sincere desire was to adopt the Jehai over the long term, we would need to be perceived as trustworthy and reliable. We would have to show the Jehai unconditional agape love. Was there a simple set of guidelines that we could follow to ensure that we can build up an image of being trustworthy?

A Common Foundation For Building Trust

Galatians 5:22 “But the fruit of the Holy Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control.” The Jehai hold up the virtues of “coolness” in the spirit which is amazingly similar to the fruit of the Holy Spirit. The Jehai prefer to avoid “hot” emotions which result in anger, frustration, hate, jealousy and resentment. These are similar to what is stated in Colossians 3:8-10 “But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him.” Developing the trust of the Jehai would have to be based on the foundation laid by the fruit of the Holy Spirit versus the spirit of the “old man” described in Colossians. The fruit of the Holy Spirit would therefore be the common foundation for building trust between the Jehai and us.

What about building an image of being reliable? Our “yes” would have to be “yes” and our “no” would have to be “no”. There should not be any false promises and ambiguity in our dealings with the Jehai. We would need to promptly deliver whatever we have mutually agreed upon with the Jehai.

Reinforcing Basic Common Values On Maintaining Relationships

In anticipation that we would be successful to locate the Jehai on our very first visit on 12th August 2000, we had brought rice packed into several bags each of 2 kilogram weight. We had also brought several cartons of biscuits and clothes. In Jehai culture, gifts of food is part of building bonds between family units in the camp community and especially so, when meat or fish is the reward of a hunt. Meat and fish will always be shared as part of the cultural system of building bonds. When Headman Charang Kiroi successfully caught about 50 fish from a fresh water stream, he shared it according to cultural rules on sharing and retained for himself only two fish which was what he needed for that day.

By bringing gifts of food, we were building the initial relational bonds between the Jehai camp community and ourselves. It was also important, since we were not familiar with the Jehai rules of sharing food, that we leave the task of sharing the gifts of food to the headmen. As for the biscuits, we used a small portion to give out in equal portions to all the children and all the adults present at the gathering so as to build up the social atmosphere of

the gathering. The balance of biscuits were left for the headman to distribute according to cultural rules of sharing. With few exceptions, the clothes were also left for the headman to distribute according to Jehai rules on sharing. Throughout the several years we worked with the Jehai, this practice was followed. Undoubtedly, this practice served to reinforce Jehai culture on maintaining good relationships and bonding as opposed to efforts to replace their social identities with that of an outside culture.



Figure 9.1 In the Jehai culture, gifts of food form part of the process of building bonds between people. Here, the biscuits we serve to Jehai men, women and children contribute to strengthen the bonds between the Jehai and ourselves.

Gifts therefore served to build bonds. Leaving the task of distribution or sharing to the headman, reinforced the headman's position and the Jehai cultural rules on sharing, and also minimised the risk of causing offence out of ignorance of cultural rules regarding sharing. As mentioned earlier, offense is culturally avoided by the Jehai as it can provoke "hot" emotions which is to be avoided. This is something fundamentally akin to Colossians 3:8-10, and lays a foundation for the Jehai to readily accept the basic value of Christian ethics in interpersonal relationships.

Before we departed from Kampung Tebang after our very first visit, we had spent time getting to know Semerengnoi. When asked what he needed in order to grow more food, he asked for a hoe (*cangkul*) and seeds. This was carefully noted and at the very next visit we brought the hoe and seeds as well several bags of rice, biscuits and clothes. We needed to be seen as people

who can be trusted and who are reliable. Providing rice could only serve as an interim measure to alleviate hunger. We needed to have a clear policy and long-term plans for food security. The issue of food security will be discussed separately in Chapter 12 of this book.

You Are My Son

When we first visited Kampung Cuweah on 12th August 2000, the Jehai group had just arrived a week earlier. Headman Charang Kiroi was not in the camp. On our next visit to Cuweh, we were very glad to meet Charang Kiroi. Over the next few months, we set out to nurture the trust of the Jehai, particularly the trust of the headmen. Gifts of food are seen as a gift of a part of the giver. The same principle applies to all gifts. Hence gifts are an important mechanism to build trust and feelings of "coolness", a state of satisfaction with feelings of relatedness. Over time, a spirit of kinship can be established. An example of the development of a strong rapport between the writer and headman Charang Kiroi that was to endure until Charang died a year later is described below.

The writer visited Charang each time we made a visit to the Jehai people. Headman Charang and the writer spent time together and exchanged thoughts and discussed many common issues including how we believed the forests, animals and man were created. At each visit the team always brought gifts of food and clothes. We also brought agricultural implements to help in growing food and fruit trees to be planted in the area. We developed a very close relationship that allowed each of us to trust the other, so much so that Charang one day decided to test how deep that relationship could go. He asked me to give him a leather belt just like the one I was using and a pair of cloth shoes (he disliked shoes made of leather or plastic or rubber). The writer readily agreed and at the next visit brought him the belt and shoes. At the next visit, he repeated the request saying that he has many sons and that he had given the last set away to one of his sons, a cultural sharing phenomenon to strengthen the bond between father and son. Charang repeated this request a total of four times, as he had four sons living with him, although I was to find out later that he had altogether six sons, two of whom were in another camp community, headed by the eldest son Kawah Charang.

Charang was testing if I had graduated from a trustworthy friend into a son he could trust with the lives of his people. On my next visit, he made his final test. Charang said to me, "I have always welcomed you to my village

and treated you well. If today I asked you to take me to your house, will you welcome me and allow me to stay in your house?” Without hesitation and with complete sincerity I stood up and answered him, “Headman Charang, I am greatly honoured. I have a room in my house in Kuala Lumpur for my guests. Please prepare yourself and as I leave for my home in Kuala Lumpur, I will today take you with me and you shall stay in my house as my guest for as long as you like. Whenever you are ready to return to Cuweh, I will personally bring you back to Cuweh.” Charang smiled and said, “I was only testing you to see how you will treat me. Now that I know and believe you, you are from hence forth my son and a member of my community. As you are my son, you have the right to take any forest product in the territory of my Jehai people. As an appointed headman and police officer, I will protect you while you are in my jungles and village.” To prove his sincerity and authority, Charang then produced as evidence his letter of authority from the Ministry of Home Affairs, appointing him as a police officer, to confirm that he not only had the traditional authority to adopt me as his son, he had the power to protect me while I was under his jurisdiction. From that day on, the relationship between Charang and the writer was firmly laid on a foundation of trust and solid goodwill of a father and his son.



Figure 9.2 Jehai Headman Charang Kiroi and Dr Paul Chen whom Charang adopted as his son.

CHAPTER 10

ADVANCING THE KINGDOM OF GOD

When Are You Going To Water Baptize Me?

While undertaking the teaching of the gospel over many months, some eight months after our first contact with the Jehai, Headman Charang of Cuweh on 21st April 2001, asked the writer, “When are you ever going to water baptize me.” I realised that indeed the time was now appropriate to begin to water baptize the many Jehai who had accepted Jesus as their personal Saviour, so I replied “I will come again and at my next visit and I will water baptize you and all your people. Where shall I do it?” Charang replied, “Here at my village in the lake”. I agreed and asked him to build a platform into the steep mountain side that now served as the shoreline of the lake. Since it was very steep, it was extremely difficult to water baptise anyone without both slipping into the lake. Like most of the Jehai camps, they were perched on a mountain top that remained above the lake that had submerged the fertile valley systems. At its deepest the manmade lake is 127 meters deep. When we returned to Cuweh on 12th May 2001, Headman Charang had built a small bamboo platform on which we could water baptize the adults of Cuweh in safety and with ease.



Figure 10.1 After nine months of teaching and discussions on the gospel, Headman Charang Kiroi asked, “When are you going to water baptize me?”

Having decided to water baptize the Jehai on 12th and 13th May 2001, all the headmen were informed that we would baptize those from Cuweh and Tebang on 12th May 2001 and those from Bush and Cuweh Anjang on 13th May 2001. We would need that each candidate complete a consent form containing his name, his identity card number if he is aged 12 years and above as all persons aged 12 years and above should have an identity card. We would also need his father’s name and the father’s consent or that of the headman, if the person is below 18 years of age. We would need all candidates to declare before the headman that they were being baptized on their own free will; that they had never been water baptized before, that they were not Muslims. Every form would be witnessed by the headman. Every individual would be photographed so that each Baptismal Certificate would contain his name, photograph and identity card number. Since we expected to water baptize about 80 persons the process had to be carefully organized so that there would not be confusion of identities. On the day of water baptism, teams of workers were assigned to each step of the process. To ensure that identities would not be confused, each candidate wore a numbered tag on his right wrist for identification.

At the request of the Jehai, we also produced a credit card sized personal identity card of membership to the church, *Rumah Sembahyang Sungei Kehidupan* (River of Life Sanctuary) which is the official name of the Jehai church. They felt that it would clarify their status when confronted by authorities.

Baptizing Charang, Kawah, Semerengnoi And The People Of Cuweh And Tebang

Early on 12th May 2001, we set off for Cuweh and on arrival in Cuweh was greeted by Headman Charang who was ready for the water baptism. Headman Charang welcomed the writer and pointing to the small bamboo platform he had built, he said to me in his dignified manner as to a son, “I have built this platform as requested and we are ready to be water baptized.” I thanked him and said, “Today we will water baptize you and your people” He laughingly replied, “Make sure that you baptize me in the name of Jesus and not in any other name”. One of his sons then took the platform that had been built with its two short legs and two long legs, and installed it on to the side of the steep slope that formed the shoreline of the manmade lake. The young man then tested the platform and declared it safe and firmly installed.

As we began preparations to conduct the water baptism, a solidly built young and dignified Jehai followed by three men and three Jehai women and some children strode into the village. He walked straight to me and said, “I am Kawah Charang, the eldest son of Headman Charang. I heard that you will today be water baptizing my father and the people of Cuweh. I have been waiting for you to visit me but so far you have not come. So today I have come myself with my people, for we too want to be water baptized today.” I was greatly relieved that this strong solidly built young and dignified Jehai had come to be water baptized. With all sincerity, I apologised that I was not aware of the existence of another camp community of Jehai headed by Kawah. With gladness in our hearts, we took time to teach him about Jesus and the significance of water baptism and prepared this group of seven Jehai men and women for water baptism.

When we were ready, the team adjourned to the spot that Charang had selected and I proceeded to water baptize Headman Charang followed by three other Jehai men and four women from Cuweh. Headman Charang thus became the first Jehai to be water baptized. I was assisted by Charang’s son, Azam Charang, who had installed the platform. Headman Charang stood close by to personally supervise the water baptism and to add his blessings to the long awaited event. After we had baptized those from Cuweh, we proceeded

to water baptise Kawah Charang and the three man and three women who had come with him from Cuweh Kawah. That morning we water baptized a total of 15 men and women most of whom were family members of Headman Charang. This was followed by a time of celebration, when Headman Charang exchanged his familiar loin cloth for a fine long sleeved shirt and long silky pants and a cloth turban. Packets of food and drinks were distributed to all who were present amidst an atmosphere of joy and gladness. Headman Charang was obviously greatly pleased that finally he and his people had been water baptized. At the next visit, we presented to Charang his framed Baptismal Certificate which he proudly hung on the wall of his bamboo hut.



Figure 10.2 On 12th May 2001, Headman Charang Kiroi becomes the first Jehai to be water baptized. Over the span of two days, 86 Jehai men and women were water baptized on 12th and 13th May 2001.



Figure 10.3 On the day Headman Charang was water baptized, his eldest son, Headman Kawah Charang and his people arrived in Cuweh and asked to be water baptized. Behind Kawah stands his younger brother, Azam.

In the afternoon, we headed for Tebang and water baptized Headman Semerengnoi followed by four other men and 10 women. All their forms had been correctly filled and witnessed by Headman Semerengnoi himself. The writer, assisted by a Jehai adult man and under the watchful supervision of Semerengnoi, water baptized each adult in shallow water in the lake just in the front of the village of Tebang witnessed by the whole village including the many children of Tebang, to the accompaniment of the crowd singing scripture songs including the song “I have decided to follow Jesus” in the Malay language. The water baptism was followed by a small celebration where packets of food and drinks were distributed to all the Jehai who were present. Headman Semerengnoi was greatly pleased and asked that his Baptismal Certificate be framed so that he could show it to government authorities that he was a Christian. On the next visit we gladly presented to him his framed Baptismal Certificate which he hung on the wall of his house. By the end of 12th May 2001, we had water baptized 13 men and 17 women, making a total of 30 Jehai who had been water baptized.



Figure 10.4 Headman Semerengnoi Kemlin of Tebang receives his baptismal certificate which he proudly hung on the wall of his house.



Figure 10.5 Ps Ang Chui Cheng, Dr. P.Chen, Headman Charang with his framed baptismal certificate, Ps Silvanus Tan and Charang's granddaughter.

Baptizing Kasout, Anjang And The People Of Bush And Cuweh Anjang

Early the next day on 13th May 2001, we moved to Kampung Bush where we water baptized Headman Kasout Menong followed by 20 other men and 16 women. The writer was assisted by Kasout during the water baptism. As in the case of Tebang, every candidate was registered only after his declaration before the Headman that he was being baptized on his own free will; that he had never been water baptized before and that he was not a Muslim. Every form had to be witnessed by the Headman. Every individual was photographed so that his Baptismal Certificate would contain his name, photograph and identity card number if he is 12 years or over. Every person who was less than 18 years of age had to have his father's consent which was given before the Headman, and where the father was not present, the consent was given by the Headman on behalf of the father. Each individual who was baptized was issued a temporary baptismal certificate which would be exchanged for an official laminated Baptismal Certificate bearing his photograph, name and identity card number on our next visit. In the afternoon of 13th May 2001, we headed for the second component of the Cuweh camp community,

called Cuweh Anjang (named after its headman, Anjang Adik). This camp community comes loosely under the authority of Charang having originally been one part of the larger camp community under Headman Charang. The third component of the original camp community is Cuweh Kawah, headed by the eldest son of Charang, Headman Kawah Charang.



Figure 10.6 Headman of Bush, Kasout Menong was the first Jehai to be water baptized in Bush, after which he assisted Dr. Chen to water baptize 20 other Jehai men and 16 Jehai women on 13th May 2001.



Figure 10.7 The then Deputy Headman Kalwin Karol, displaying his baptismal certificate. After the death of Headman Semerengnoi, Kalwin Karol became the headman of Tebang.



Figure 10.8 Lipas Kuniyit, a Jehai living in a small Jehai camp, showing his membership card of Rumah Sembahyang Sungai Kehidupan (River of Life Sanctuary) as proof that he is a water baptized Christian.

When we arrived, we were greeted by Headman Anjang Adik. We went through the same steps of preparation and required each candidate to make his written declaration before the Headman that he was being baptized on his own free will. Altogether, we water baptized 10 men and nine women at Cuweh Anjang that day. By the end of 13th May 2009, we had water baptized 31 men and 25 women that day, making a total of 56 Jehai water baptized on 13th May 2001.

During the two days of 12th and 13th May 2001, 44 Jehai men and 42 Jehai women making a total of 86 men and women had been water baptized. By July 2009, 203 Jehai had been water baptized.

Lepai Leaves Air Banun Regroupment Scheme To Set Up His Own Village

Three months after our meeting with Lepai, he moved out of the Air Banun Scheme. Apparently he had become disillusioned with living there. He set up camp on a hill just a few kilometres from Air Banun, moving into it with his wife, mother, 13 children and 14 grand children and named his village Desa Ria (Village of Happiness). On 28th July 2001, Kawah the son of Headman Charang suggested that the team visit Lepai in Desa Ria.

His village thus became the fourth Jehai village we were coming in contact with. Despite living in Air Banun, Lepai and his children had retained their traditional beliefs in spite of pressure to change. Lepai had said that he knew all about religions and that they were all the same. He was happy to remain with his traditional beliefs.

On the day we visited Desa Ria for the very first time, Lepai was ill. Many of his children and grand children had suddenly become sick the day before we visited them. On the day we arrived many were seriously sick. Many had high fever and several had bronchitis. Lepai was glad to see us and greeted us with joy. Dr Chen Siew Tin, who was leading the team, began to treat the various sick members of his family. The team prayed for every sick person, many of whom were so ill that they were glad to be prayed for so that Jesus the Healer would heal them. Dr ST Chen took the opportunity to introduce Jesus Christ the Saviour. Lepai was glad to receive Jesus as his personal Saviour and Healer. That evening, Lepai and 14 other adults accepted Jesus as their personal Saviour. In their illness they were glad not only to receive the medical team that appeared in the nick of time but also Jesus the Healer. They eagerly invited the team to return and visit them. They pursued God thereafter with keen enthusiasm.

Four months later, Lepai had built a house for the first resident Semai Christian workers to stay among the Jehai. He also built the first building dedicated as a place of worship. The inner part of the building was reserved only for worship and teaching of the Bible. The outer part he used as a meeting hall for visitors to his village.

CHAPTER 11

DISCIPLING THE JEHAİ

Regular Fortnightly Visits To Disciple The Jehai

By December 2000, about four months after our first contact with the Jehai, we had been making fortnightly visits to the Jehai communities, namely, Tebang, Cuweh, and Bush. Each of these communities had built bamboo and wood community halls which conveniently served as a venue for each of our visits. We realised that in order to raise the level of spiritual maturity of the Jehai and for the Jehai to better understand how to grow food crops, we would need to expose them to other Orang Asli who were Christian and who knew how to grow food crops.

Contact With The More Advanced Semai.

In view of our close links to Pastor Silvanus Tan of Langkap, Perak, we decided that the semi-nomadic Jehai needed to be exposed to the Semai who live in South Perak in the districts of Batang Padang and Hilir Perak not only for them to learn how to grow food crops but also to witness the lifestyle of Christian Orang Asli. The Semai are the largest Orang Asli people group with a population of about 39,000 people. They belong to the Senoi cluster of Orang Asli people and many have been Christian for years. If we could persuade a small group of Jehai to venture outside the Temenggor Forest, we would be able to show them how Orang Asli people grow a wide variety of food crops, such as corn, sweet potato, bananas, vegetables as well as give

them a firsthand experience of living with Christian Orang Asli. With the agreement of Pastor Silvanus Tan, we started to try to get the Jehai headmen to send some young Jehai men to Langkap to live for about two weeks among Christian Semai. Discussions began in December 2000, four months after our first contact. Initially there was much resistance out of fear as these Jehai had never ventured beyond the nearby Banding Island, about 50 km away from the district capital of Grik. Langkap would be about 270 km away from Banding Island. Further their hosts would be Semai with whom they were not familiar.

After several weeks of encouragement, Headman Semerengnoi agreed to let three Jehai young men under the leadership of a Temiar man, who had been to Ipoh and elsewhere in Perak, to visit Langkap and to live with Christian Semai for a two week period. We prepared the four on what to expect and gave them new clothes, shoes, a wallet with some cash, toiletries, and a bag each. On 18th January 2001, five months after our first contact with the Jehai, the small team of three Jehai led by one Temiar, boarded our van and headed for Langkap, where they were well received by the Semai Christians and Pastor Silvanus Tan. They were housed in the church and participated in the church activities and were shown how the Semai live and how they grow their crops.



Figure 11.1 On 18th January 2001, three Jehai youth, who had never previously left the Temenggor Forest, led by a Temiar (third from left), leave for Langkap to be acquainted with the Semai Christians and to learn how the Semai grow food crops.

Two days after their arrival, we were informed that the Temiar man had vanished from the village and a search of the surroundings failed to locate him. We immediately left Kuala Lumpur for Langkap and on arrival in Langkap, met the three Jehai who were greatly relieved to see us. The three were obviously unnerved by the sudden disappearance of their Temiar friend who had suddenly left the house at 5.30 am and vanished, without informing them as to where he was going. We were informed that after a thorough search, the Temiar could not be found anywhere near the village. We surmised that the Temiar, who was familiar with South Perak, had decided to visit some friends and to return on his own. The three Jehai agreed to stay on despite the sudden disappearance of the Temiar. They completed their proposed stay of two weeks and felt very welcome among the Christian Semai. Having noted that the Semai were very adept in growing food crops and how they nurtured their crops, the Jehai felt that they had acquired some knowledge of how better to grow food crops. When they arrived back at Tebang, they were pleasantly surprised to see that the Temiar had returned on the fifth day of their trip on his own without contacting his Jehai friends whom he left in the Christian village among the Semai.

When we met the Temiar in Tebang, about a month later, he told us that he had felt extremely uncomfortable living in the church which was holy, and that spirits had, in a dream just before dawn, led him to leave the church at dawn and had led him to an old Semai burial place in the nearby forest, where he had stayed for two days and one night and had been in contact with the spirits, before travelling back on his own to Tebang.

In retrospect, the Temiar had served his purpose in giving the Jehai sufficient courage to agree to travel to Langkap, and having served that purpose, had left Langkap to return to Tebang on his own. After this experience, the Jehai were no longer afraid to travel to Langkap and elsewhere and as a result were exposed to how other Christian Orang Asli lived

Continuing The Fortnightly Visits To The Jehai

Meanwhile, our visiting teams continued to visit the Jehai every two weeks teaching the Word, guiding the young how to play the guitar and teaching the people to sing scripture songs, encouraging them to be filled with the Holy Spirit and to be baptized with the Holy Spirit. This was led by our anchor man, Joshua Prakash, who soon became a familiar face to the Jehai. We helped the people to grow food crops including fruit trees. This will

be described in detail in the Chapter 12 dealing with developing food security. We regularly provided medical care and this will be described in detail in Chapter 13 dealing with health, medical and environmental protection. Another important aim was to enable the people particularly the children, to read and write, and to develop skills in the arts, and this will be discussed in detail in Chapter 14 which deals with the promotion of literacy and the arts.

Up to July 2001, we had been renting our boats from Mohamed Shah who was glad to have us as his regular customers. Then in July 2001, Mohamed Shah informed us that government officers had instructed him not to rent us any boats. We then began renting boats from other boatmen, but soon each of them would suddenly no longer want to rent us his boat. With no more boats available to us, we had no choice but to buy our own ten passenger boat powered by a 30 horse power outboard motor. The boat and motor was delivered to us and launched on 5th January 2002 and was named “*Khabar Beded*” which in Jehai means “Good News”



Figure 11.2 We acquire, on 5th January 2002, our own boat and named it “*Khabar Beded*” which in Jehai means “Good News”.

In May 2001, nine months after our first contact with the Jehai, Pastor Silvanus Tan suggested that it would be appropriate at this time to try to get full-time Christian workers to live among the Jehai. He, along with two Semai men who were church workers, Bah Chong and Basar, visited the Jehai to ascertain how best we could proceed. They recommended that we seek permission from the Jehai headmen to agree to have Semai workers live among the Jehai to teach them not only the Word of God but also how to read and write.

We enquired of Semerengnoi but he was not keen. In August 2001, we approached Headman Charang as the writer had developed a father-son rapport with Charang. Charang often enquired after Dr Chen as a father would enquire of a son he had missed. Despite the reservation of Jehai regarding Orang Asli of other tribes other than the Temiar who are their neighbours, Charang graciously agreed to build a house in Cuweh for two Semai church workers and to take responsibility for their safety and presence in his village.

In the meanwhile Charang also agreed to let five young Jehai men from Cuweh attend a Family Camp run by the Assemblies of God for Christian Orang Asli in Port Dickson from 10th to 13th September 2001. This would be the second occasion for the Jehai to go outside of the Temenggor Forest and to meet Christian Orang Asli. Lepai agreed to lead the group as he was familiar with travelling to many places including Kuala Lumpur. They returned from the camp, full of enthusiasm for Jesus having witnessed how other Orang Asli families revel in the love of God.

Headman Charang Becomes Seriously Ill And Dies

As promised by Charang, the five young men from Cuweh began to build the house for the Semai church workers. We provided the group with long knives and food supplies. When the house was half built, Charang became seriously ill. Lepai informed us by telephone and the writer and a team rushed to see Charang. On 22nd September 2001, as soon as I arrived in Cuweh, I headed for Charang's hut and went inside. Charang lay on his bed and he mentioned to the writer that he would be dying soon and that in his dreams he had seen that during its travels, he had been ambushed by some Semai who disliked him and who had shot him with ten deadly arrows. I examined him and offered to take him to hospital, but he declined and insisted that he would be dying soon. He had no fever. He would not eat or drink much as he prepared to die. There were many relatives around and his sister was always with him nursing him. Each night the whole village moved across to

Cuweh Kawah leaving Charang alone as was their custom. We left medicines, vitamins and instructed the people to feed him and to ensure that he had lots of water to drink. Four days later, on 26th September 2001, we received news that Headman Charang had died.

A memorial service was held for Headman Charang two weeks later, on 10th October 2001, and it was attended by many of the Jehai including Semerengnoi, Kalwin, Kawah, Anjang, Lepai and other Jehai headmen. Some 200 people participated including our team and several government officers. With Charang's death, the building of the house for the Semai had to be abandoned.



Figure 11.3 After the death of Headman Charang on 26th September 2001, about 200 people including all the Jehai headmen gathered at the memorial service on 10th October 2001.

Resident Orang Asli Christian Workers

Lepai offered to build the house for the Semai workers in Desa Ria. By November 2001, the house was almost ready. Pastor Silvanus Tan, Bah Chong and Basar provided the finishing touches to make it fit for occupation. Gas cylinders and a gas cooker for cooking were provided. On 11th November 2001, two women Semai workers moved in. The arrangement was for a pair of women Semai workers, Naomi and Rebekah, to live in the base in Desa Ria and to reach out to the other villages during the week. At the end of the month, the two women Semai workers would be replaced for two weeks by

two Semai men, Bah Chong and Basar, while the two women take a break. Transport to and from Desa Ria to Langkap, would be provided by the team from Kuala Lumpur who would continue to visit the Jehai every fortnight. Our anchor man would be Joshua Prakash. The Semai workers would teach using the book entitled “Pedoman Kehidupan Kristen” We would employ a boatman, Agim, who lives in Desa Ria and is recommended by Lepai. The boatman would help the Semai workers as they travel from one village to another. A pour flush latrine was built next to the Semai worker’s house not only for their use but also to serve as a model for the Jehai to learn that environmental sanitation was important in order to protect against intestinal parasites. Lepai had installed water pipes to tap into a small jungle stream to bring water to Desa Ria. With his help, water pipes were extended to the Semai house to bring clean water to their house. In the meanwhile, Lepai had built a bamboo and wood community hall which he divided into two sections. The inner part was reserved for worship while the outer part was used as a meeting hall. This multipurpose hall served as a church. A generator was installed to provide the Semai workers, as well as the meeting hall and a few nearby houses, with electricity for a few hours each evening. This enabled teaching to take place in the evenings.

In addition to teaching the people the Word of God, the Semai workers would continue to teach the children and adults how to read and write, sing scripture songs, art work, music, the growing of food crops around the house and simple personal hygiene.



Figure 11.4 The two Semai women workers, Rebekah and Naomi, who were based in Desa Ria, imparted many skills and raised the daughters of Lepai to be leaders.

Another important aim was to raise a generation of leaders who could continue the work started so far. Lepai’s children were among the few Jehai who can read and write, and the Semai began to focus on training them so that they can begin to lead the Jehai in the longer term. Lepai had been trained as a medical assistant and had taken the opportunity to ensure that his many children could read and write. The first Jehai to successfully complete secondary education was one of Lepai’s daughters. Under the tutorship of the Semai workers, Lepai’s children especially his daughters began to rise and soon were leading in praise and worship, prayers, and learning how to teach the Word. The children memorised whole portions of the Bible and could recite it with such joy.

Within a few months, we could discern the great improvement in the spiritual maturity of the Jehai in Desa Ria, particularly the women. The women rapidly rose to become leaders in praise and worship and prayer. Filled with the Holy Spirit, the people both men and women prayed in tongues with great faith. On one occasion, when our visiting team was caught in the village by a very heavy down pour, Lepai led the people in praying in tongues and in 15 minutes the sky cleared and Lepai with a broad smile said, “God has answered our prayers and the rain has stopped.”

Having achieved success in Desa Ria, the Semai workers moved to Tebang in January 2003. Headman Semerengnoi had gladly agreed to build a house for two women Semai workers. The same pattern of teaching continued, this time with Tebang as base. The people in Tebang are mostly illiterate



Figure 11.5 The Semai workers, who were based in Tebang in 2003, impacted the lives of the women and children in Tebang and in other Jehai villages.

hence the progress was slower. Only a few children could read and write. Nevertheless, attendance at teaching sessions was good with many women participating. Men were more reluctant. However Semerengnoi was always present and encouraging. The Semai workers visited each village during the week and continued to help them grow in spiritual maturity at the same time teaching the women and children how to read and write. But the men were somewhat reluctant to sit and be taught by the women.

To further expose the Jehai to other Christian Orang Asli, a group of nine Jehai, selected to represent all the Jehai villages, participated in the Orang Asli Family Camp in Port Dickson conducted by the Assemblies of God. They were accompanied by the two Semai workers.

In the meanwhile the fortnightly visits of the team from Kuala Lumpur continued in support of the work being carried out by the Semai workers. Water baptisms were carried out from time to time as more people came to accept Jesus. For example on 27th June 2003, 34 Jehai were water baptized, with 19 being water baptized in Tebang. Six people led by Headman Ranting Limau of Kampung Kejar in the curfew area were also water baptized. They had arrived from Kejar to live temporarily in Tebang. Six Jehai from Kampung Cuweh and three from Desa Ria were also water baptized that day. With the baptism of this group of 34 Jehai, the grand total of Jehai who had been water baptised since the first water baptism on 12th May 2001, was 152 persons of whom 84 were men and 68 were women.



Figure 11.6 Headman Ranting Limau and five Jehai men from the curfew area in the Belum Forest, came to Tebang and after being taught about Jesus, requested to be water baptized on 23rd June 2003. Here Headman Kalwin Karol assists Dr Chen to water baptize Headman Ranting followed by the other five men from the Belum Forest.

We Find The Fifth Jehai Camp Community Of Kampung Sungei Tekam

We were invited by Jusman, Lepai's son, to visit him in Pulau Tujuh, which was the failed site of the original Resettlement Scheme where the displaced Jehai were first located in 1975. But it had been largely abandoned in 1979 when the Jehai were forced to move once again to the Regroupment Scheme Air Banun. After a few visits, Jusman informed us that he was moving to a much better site a few kilometres up the Singor River into the village of Sungei Tekam. On 20th June 2003, the team travelled up the Singor River and visited the Jehai-Temiar village of Sungei Tekam, where we met Headman Serdang, a Temiar whose wife is a Jehai. Kampung Sungei Tekam had existed for more than 20 years. About 90 per cent of the population were Jehai or Jehai-Temiar people where either father or mother was a Jehai. About 10 per cent of the population were Temiar.

Other than the higher per cent of Temiar, we found that Sungei Tekam was entirely different from the other Jehai villages we had been visiting so far. All the Jehai villages such as Tebang, Cuweh, Desa Ria as well as Bush were located on former mountain tops of the now submerged fertile valleys of the Temenggor Forest. Bush was later renamed as Kerbah when it was eventually relocated a short distance away near a clean mountain stream which served as a source of water for the people of Kerbah.



Figure 11.7 Unlike the other Jehai villages, which were perched on what were formerly mountain tops, Kampung Sungei Tekam lay on the broad fertile northern bank of the Singor River, making it an ideal place to grow food crops.

Sungei Tekam is located in a natural fertile valley just a few kilometres beyond the surface level of the manmade lake. It is located on the northern side of the Singor River, a few kilometres beyond the remnants of Pulau Tujuh. When we arrived in 2003, logging had not reached the vicinity of the Singor River. The River was full of a great variety of fish and the people of Sungei Tekam had a plentiful supply of fresh fish. A few years later, in 2006, the Singor River had become seriously affected. When it rained heavily, the Singor River turned yellow from the serious soil erosion that poured into the Singor River from logging taking place in the catchment area upstream of Kampung Sungei Tekam. Unfortunately logging is extending with each passing day, with the official aim that 53.6 per cent of the Temenggong Forest will be subject to logging within a ten year period.

Preserving The Jehai Language And Music

The Semai workers based among the Jehai, were asked to take a holistic approach and teach the people not only the word from the scriptures, but also teach them how to read and write and art work as well as songs. We were keen to preserve the Jehai language and decided to carefully translate some of the songs which had a slower rhythm into Jehai and teach the Jehai to sing these to the accompaniment of their bamboo orchestra (*centong*). In addition they would teach the people simple personal hygiene and how to grow food crops around the house. In November 2003, a group of eight Jehai from the various villages, led by the two Semai workers, visited the River of Life Sanctuary Bandar Puteri in Selangor. They presented a medley of six songs and four dances to the accompaniment of their bamboo orchestra (*centong*). The Jehai were wearing their headgear (*renun*) made of young palm leaves. They were also wearing a shoulder slung strap (*tenuak*) made of the same young palm leaves. Three young men danced the Jehai dance with two of them carrying blowpipes while they danced to scripture songs in Malay as well as in Jehai and in Semai. The preservation of their language as well as their culture is important and is compatible with their acceptance of Jesus Christ as their God and Saviour. It is important not to impose on them Western or other non-Jehai cultural norms that have nothing to do with the basic doctrine of Jesus Christ as God and Saviour. For example there is no need to discard their music form. This can be retained while the lyrics of their traditional songs that address the spirits in their traditional belief system will need to be replaced by scriptural words of praise and worship of Jesus Christ as God and Saviour. The Jehai

now have a number of songs in their language that are of a slow rhythm that fit perfectly with the bamboo orchestra (*centong*)



Figure 11.8 Jehai youth with blowpipes in hand and wearing their headgear (*renun*) and shoulder slung strap (*tenuak*), dance to the beat of the bamboo orchestra (*centong*) while singing scripture songs praising Jesus in the Jehai language. The preservation of the Jehai identity is important.

Resident Indigenous Christian Workers From Sarawak

By the second half of 2003, it became clear that we would need to have a man and a wife team as resident Christian workers. The Semai workers had done a tremendous job raising the spiritual maturity of the women and children particularly in Desa Ria and to a significant extent in Tebang. However the impact of the women Semai workers upon the spiritual lives of the men was not as significant. By late 2003, a retired Sarawak Lun Bawang pastor, Pengiran Ating and his wife Selama, agreed to take up residence among the Jehai. It was decided that they should reside in Cuweh and Headman Kawah, who had been appointed as *penghulu* (headman) by the JHEOA, agreed to build a house for the couple. Pengiran and his wife built on the work done by the Semai workers and continued to build the spiritual maturity of the Jehai, particularly in Cuweh where they resided.

The Aboriginal Peoples Act 1954, controls contact between Orang Asli and non-Orang Asli. Here was the first occasion when a non-Orang Asli would be staying in the Jehai village over a long period. However, we knew that the law also gives the Orang Asli headman the right to determine for the good of his community, if a non-Orang Asli shall be permitted to stay overnight for a short period, as when the Orang Asli headman, as part of tourism, decides to host a tourist in his village for an overnight stay usually for a fee. The headman can also decide to permit a non-Orang Asli, to stay for a prolonged period if that individual will be of benefit to his community. For example if a headman decides that a teacher is required for his people, he has the right to grant that individual permission to stay in his village, but the headman must inform the authorities. Hence we instructed Pengiran to refer any queries regarding his stay in Kampung Cuweh, and what he was doing in Cuweh, to Headman Kawah. To put it in another way, our worker's stay in a Jehai village is completely at the pleasure of his host, the Jehai headman.

By December 2003, the Semai workers began to withdraw from Tebang and the duties were passed on to Pengiran. The process of selecting a few younger man and women to be trained as leaders was started. This was naturally most successful in Desa Ria where the youth were better educated. Leadership training using teaching materials from our partner agencies on discipleship proved to be most helpful. A number of the youth have attended these courses over the years and have become increasingly more mature.

Meanwhile, Pengiran Ating, visited the five Jehai villages at regular intervals. In Sungei Tekam, just like the other Jehai people of the other villages, many of the people were enthusiastic about the gospel, and at every visit about 25 people would gather to participate in the scripture songs and the messages that followed. The people were poor and many children were naked. We provided them with clothes, agricultural implements and seeds. Each household was given two kilogram of rice, some anchovy or ground nuts. As elsewhere these were always left to the headman to distribute together with the gift of clothes that we brought. As in the other villages, we were regularly water baptizing those who accepted Jesus as their personal Saviour. Thus on 12 April 2004, we water baptized six women. One man, who was scheduled also to be water baptized that day, could not attend as his child was ill.



Figure 11.9 In December 2003, Ps Pengiran Ating and his wife Selama took up residence in Cuweh. Pengiran was provided with a boat and boatman to give him mobility to cover the other Jehai villages of Desa Ria, Tebang, Bush, and Sungei Tekam.

The Jehai Halaq Requests To Be Water Baptized

On 4th May 2004, on one of our visits to Sungei Tekam, after we had spent some time with the people singing songs and after the writer had given a brief but simple gospel message on Jesus Christ, and as we were preparing to depart, Seneberek Keladi, the Jehai *halaq* (spirit medium), came up to me and asked if he could be water baptized. I saw absolutely no reason to refuse him. As is their custom, he had been quietly listening to the message from a short distance away from the rest of the group of women and children. Most of the men sit or stand a short distance away separate from the women. After all, he was the much respected halaq of the Jehai people. We took time to carefully explain the significance of water baptism and to lead him in the sinner's prayer. After due preparation, we water baptized him in the Singor River and subsequently gave him his Baptismal Certificate and his membership card. Seneberek Keladi, the *halaq*, subsequently regularly joined in worship services when a multipurpose building was built in Sungei Tekam.



Figure 11.10 On 4th May 2004, Seneberek Keladi, the *halaq*, asked to be water baptized, which we did after due explanation. Seneberek wears a headgear (*renun*) decorated with flowers and has his face painted with black and red stripes. Through his nose is a decorative porcupine quill.

Meanwhile, the fortnightly visits by our teams from Kuala Lumpur continued. One of its roles was to support the build up of scriptural teaching materials for children. A team set about developing teaching aids for children. A great deal of time was spent drawing and painting teaching aids based on Bible stories. At the same time, women were taught the skill of bead work and basket making.

The Headman Of Sungei Tekam Demands A School And A Teacher

On 5th July 2004, Headman Serdang, demanded that we must bring in a resident school teacher and build a school building in Sungei Tekam. He clarified that the children refuse to go to the Air Banun Boarding School and the continued lack of educational facilities was not acceptable. When we asked him if this was not the duty of the JHEOA, he replied that the JHEOA had not set up a school despite the fact that the village had existed for over 25 years and that he saw no hope of the JHEOA ever building a school in Sungei Tekam.

Left with no alternative but to accept his demand, we decided to build a multipurpose building that would serve not only as a school for the preschool children, but also as a learning centre for adults as well as older children who had passed the maximum age that the government would accept into primary school. In addition we would use the centre to teach children songs, music and artistic skills in drawing, painting, and dancing, and as a place of worship. Further, we would need to build a wooden house for the teacher.

Finding a teacher who would stay in Sungei Tekam was difficult. Nevertheless, we decided that we would begin by building a house for the teacher. We searched for skilled men who knew how to fell hardwood trees, cut these trees into planks and build the house and the multipurpose building in Sungei Tekam. After extensive searches, in August 2005, a group of Christian Sabah Murut church workers arrived in Sungei Tekam and began to build the house from forest trees. They felled a huge hardwood tree and sliced it into planks from which to build the structure of the house. The roof was to be of zinc sheets. The floor would be made of hardwood planks. The kitchen floor and the toilet floor would be of cement since sand was readily available from the Singor River.



Figure 11.11 Under the authority of Headman Serdang, the Sabah team fell a hardwood tree and built a multipurpose Centre of Learning in Sungei Tekam.

While it was under construction, the authorities arrived to question the group of volunteers from Sabah. As had been advised, they politely referred the authorities to the headman at whose pleasure and instructions they were putting up the building. The headman, based upon his right to permit non-Orang Asli to stay in his village, clarified to the authorities that this was to be the house of the school teacher who will be coming to teach the children since the children would not go to the boarding school at Air Banun. The authorities left after having been satisfied that the venture was of benefit to the people of Sungei Tekam.

When the teacher's house was finally completed, it looked magnificent. A bathroom, toilet and kitchens were added. Water came from the pipe system that tapped a stream about a kilometre away. This water system had been built by us earlier to provide clean water to much of the village at Sungei Tekam. One of the Sabah volunteers was Henry Luyan a Murut from Sabah. He took a liking to the people and place and expressed a desire to take up the position of teacher in Sungei Tekam.

In December 2005, the resident Christian worker Pengiran Ating based in Cuweh, retired for health reasons and returned to Sarawak. By early 2006, Henry Luyan followed by his wife Jennie had taken up residence in the Jehai Temiar village of Sungei Tekam. Teaching of children took place in a small thatch hut which served as a community hall and as a temporary school.

The next step was to build the solid hardwood multipurpose building. The group of five experienced Christian workers returned to Sungei Tekam in March 2006 and began to build a hardwood multipurpose building. They felled hardwood trees and cut these into planks and built the structure of hardwood. The rectangular building would be able to accommodate about 100 people. It would serve as a school for the children and for adults and would be a place for the people to learn songs, dances, music, arts and crafts and serve as a place of worship. Half way through the construction, the authorities arrived to question the construction team, who had been instructed to refer any questions to the headman. Once again the headman, clarified the purpose of the building and the building continued without further interruption until it was completed about four weeks later. It was a beautiful building. We installed a generator to provide electricity to the teacher's house, the multipurpose building and a few nearby houses. Teaching could now take place in the evening when all the adults including the men were back.

Upon the completion of the multipurpose building the authorities came on a number of occasions both in the day and in the evenings to ascertain if indeed the building was used as the headman said it would be. The authorities

found that indeed the building was used as intended and the authorities were satisfied. There were children attending classes in the morning, adults learning to read and write at other times. At night there were sessions teaching songs, music and dances to the children and adults.

Was the building a church? Not in any traditional sense. It was a multipurpose building that served as a Centre of Learning for the many needs of the people including the promotion of literacy, the arts, music, singing, health education, moral education and spiritual development and the authorities were satisfied. The aim was to prepare preschool children so that they would be able to cope with boarding school at Air Banun. Details of the educational aspects of the programme will be discussed in Chapter 14 that deals with the promotion of literacy and the arts. Undoubtedly, the multipurpose building also served as a place of worship and Sunday service was openly conducted each week by the teacher, Henry Luyan.

Lepai Requests For A Multipurpose Building For The People Of Desa Ria

In April 2006, Lepai made a strong plea for a multipurpose building for the people of Desa Ria. His children were all able to read and write. In fact one of his daughters became the first Jehai to successfully complete secondary education. They would be the teachers to help the preschool children to be motivated and better prepared to go to the nearby Air Banun School. They would teach the children songs, music, the arts and the scriptures.

In fact, in late 2004, we had identified one of Lepai's daughter, who was about to complete secondary school, for training as a leader. With her father's consent she had been sponsored to attend Bible classes in Langkap. At each term break, she went home to her village in the Temenggor Forest and by December 2005, she had completed one year of classes in Bible studies. On her return home, she became a leader and not only began to teach the Jehai about Jesus, but also the preschool children in readiness to enter the primary school in Air Banun. The daughters of Lepai are accomplished worship leaders and led the praise and worship at services held in the bamboo hall dedicated for worship. These women had built up their knowledge of the Bible and were good prayer leaders. They were able to lead the community in Desa Ria in worship and were able to teach the Word. They taught the children the Word and also encouraged them to memorise portions of the scriptures.

In early 2006, Lepai had decided to relocate to a new site and this was another factor in his asking for a multipurpose building to replace the old bamboo hall. In June 2006, the same group of skilled Sabah Christian workers arrived in Deas Ria and began to build the multipurpose building. Lepai being the Representative of the Orang Asli people of the Temenggor Forest was highly respected by the authorities. This time the building was completed within 18 days without any visits from the authorities. It was an exact replica of the building in Sungei Tekam and of the same dimensions and was a magnificent building of hardwood with a zinc roof and a cement floor. It could easily last half a century as it was termite proof. Electricity was provided by the generator we had provided when the Semai workers were based in Desa Ria.



Figure 11.12 Lepai stands outside the beautiful hardwood multipurpose Centre of Learning in Desa Ria, which also serves as a place of worship.

Official Opening Of The Multipurpose Buildings

On 27 July 2006, the writer accompanied by a team that included seven medical students who were studying in the United Kingdom, visited the Jehai villages and attended the official opening of the multipurpose buildings in Sungei Tekam and later at Desa Ria. All the seven medical students were on their overseas electives, part of which was on Medical Missions.

The Multipurpose Buildings Serve As Centres of Learning

Each of these two multipurpose buildings would be able to accommodate about 100 people. The buildings would serve as Centres of Learning. Firstly each of these centres would serve as a preparatory centre for preschool children. They would also serve as Centres of Learning for the children and for adults and would be a place for the people to learn songs, dances, music, arts and crafts, agricultural training to sustain food security, health care, health education and as a clinic for visiting medical teams whether the teams are of visiting Christians or members of the government mobile clinics. Finally, these centres would serve as a place of worship and the teaching of the Word of God.

The resident teacher, whether she is a Jehai, as in the case of Lepai's daughters in Desa Ria, or an outsider, as in the case of our resident staff from Sabah based in Sungei Tekam, would serve as the focal point for all learning activities including literacy, songs, and dances, music, arts and crafts and health education. Until such time as we can get the consent to build other multipurpose buildings and to locate resident teachers in the other Jehai villages of Tebang and Kerbah, and Cuweh, the Centre of Learning in Sungei Tekam would serve as the base for the education of the Jehai living in these three villages. The resident staff based in Sungei Tekam were asked to make weekly visits to the other villages. To facilitate this we provide the team based in Sungei Tekam with boats to enable the team to teach in other Jehai villages. But there tends to be a reluctance to travel to other villages to carry out these essential activities and a natural tendency to focus on the village where the worker resides, hence over time, the villages without a resident teacher always become neglected by the worker. We only partially solved the problem by rotating our resident staff from Desa Ria, to Tebang to Cuweh and finally to Sungei Tekam. It seems that this only served to rotate the focus of the workers from Desa Ria to Tebang to Cuweh and finally to Sungei Tekam.



Figure 11.13 Jehai man wearing his headgear (*renun*) decorated with flowers.



Figure 11.14 Jehai men and women (on the opposite side of the hall) gather for the official opening of the multipurpose Centre of Learning in Sungai Tekam



Figure 11.15 Our Christian partner agencies provided us with teaching materials that ranged from simple coloured story books for preschool children to materials on discipleship training which proved to be very useful in training educated Jehai youth to be the future leaders of the people.

Task Of Raising Jehai Leaders Remains A Challenge

Over the past nine years, we were able to begin to raise up a few Jehai and Temiar youth as leaders. Many were the children of Lepai. However the critical number of young leaders remained far too few for the Jehai to be able to stand upon their own feet. Much still remains to be done to raise adequate numbers of Jehai youth to a higher level of leadership so that they can lead the Jehai community into the future. This is an important unaccomplished task that must be one of our priorities during the next few years.

CHAPTER 12

DEVELOPING FOOD SECURITY

The Problem Of A Small Subsistence Base

As noted earlier, one impact of the manmade Temenggor Dam was the drowning of 152 sq. km of the most fertile valleys upon which the Jehai depended as a source of food for centuries. The second factor contributing to the shortage of traditional sources of food for the Jehai was the regroupment of the Jehai for security reasons imposed by the Communist Insurgency War, so much so that the subsistence base for these regrouped Jehai camp communities was too small to support the people. When we first came into contact with the Jehai camp communities in 2000, mortality was very high, probably about nine times higher than the national average (Gomes, 1990). A third factor is the on-going logging of up to 53.6 per cent of the Temenggor Forest as mentioned below.

One of the sad results of the Aboriginal Peoples Act 1954, was to destroy the indigenous rights of the people and remove the autonomy of the Orang Asli peoples. Their traditional territories would not be recognised and their traditional territories would become forfeited by the government. Forest exploitation of these traditional territories of the indigenous peoples is the aim of the government regardless of the impact it will have upon the lives of the indigenous people. In the New Straits Times of Monday 6th July 2009, the Secretary General of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Putrajaya, stated that the Temenggor Forest Reserve, which covers 147,705 hectares, has been classified as a production forest in which 53.6 per cent of the forest would be made available for harvesting of wood and that only 46.4

per cent would remain as protected forest. The report indicated that 79,117 hectares would be subjected to harvesting for wood, and that such logging activities would include the construction of logging roads. Logging and the construction of logging tracks, causes forest destruction and soil erosion. As a consequence there is destruction of flora, and wild life as well as fishes in the streams and rivers. In reply to complaints that these activities have caused soil erosion, the Secretary General of the Ministry replied that an investigation by the Perak Forest Reserve Department on 3 June 2009, showed that there was no severe pollution. In one sense he was admitting that there was soil erosion but it was not severe. Even moderate soil erosion and logging destroys the eco-system greatly. So far as the Jehai were concerned, the impact of 53.6 per cent of their traditional lands being subjected to logging spells the end of their future as semi-nomadic peoples as their subsistence based would shrink by a fatal quantity. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, stated that logging would take place at the rate of 7,770 hectares per year and hence within 10 years from when it began around 2004, the traditional territories of the semi-nomadic Jehai would be logged out.



Figure 12.1 The Jehai are dependent upon the forest for subsistence. Here Jehai prepare to cook a pair of porcupine they caught. The government has announced that it will permit 53.6 per cent of the Temenggor Forest to be logged. This combined with the drowning of 152 sq km of the most fertile traditional territories of the Jehai, has left the semi-nomadic people with a severe food shortage.

At our very first contact with the Jehai on 12th August 2000, three very young children were seriously ill with bronchopneumonia, which is an indication of the very poor health of these children who were also weakened by malnutrition. Several women said that they had not had any food for days and those men who had gone to look for food in the surrounding forests often returned with no food at all. Further, even though the camp had been established a few weeks earlier, the few tapioca plants they had planted could not be harvested for another six months. Besides, the amount of tapioca plants would be too few to sustain the community over the long term. Other than tapioca, these semi-nomadic Jehai had no agricultural skills to grow corn (maize), vegetables or rice. There were no fruit trees and the lake yielded few fish. However the other major problem was that they had practically no agricultural skills and that it would take time for these skills and the motivation to grow food crops to become established.

To add to these problems, the soil of these mountain tops on which the Jehai were now living was unlike that of the submerged fertile alluvial valleys. The soil on the mountain tops was not suitable for cereal crops such as rice. What strategy do we follow in order to bring food security to a semi-nomadic people perched on mountain tops of relatively infertile soil

A Short Term Emergency Strategy

We needed to have an immediate strategy of providing emergency food supplements to alleviate malnutrition and reduce the death of children and mothers from malnutrition. We also needed a long term strategy to ensure food security so that the ever shrinking subsistence base of these Jehai could be broadened to provide the Jehai with sufficient food.

From the very onset, we provided every Jehai family unit with a food supplement of two kilogram of rice every two weeks. In addition anchovy (*ikan bilis*) or groundnuts, which are a source of proteins, and cooking oil was provided. Requests for coffee, tea, bottled and canned drinks, sugar, tinned sweetened condensed milk, were turned down. The headmen were informed that sweets, sugar, sweetened condensed milk, bottled and canned drinks would result in dental decay and were not recommended. Coffee and tea were also not essential for survival of children and mothers. Instead, we went to great pains to explain the need for sufficient energy foods such as rice and the usefulness of a supplement of anchovy as a source of protein. We were pleasantly surprised to find out from the headmen that they fully accepted our

advice and even told the tourist guides, who occasionally brought tourists from overseas to visit their camps, not to hand out sweets to the people but to suggest to tourists to bring other healthier foods, such as groundnuts as gifts.

These food supplements which were begun in 2000, continued for several years. At its peak, we were providing a total of 178 kilograms of rice every two weeks for 89 Jehai families with a total population of about 480 persons, spread out in five Jehai camp communities as well as pockets of small Jehai settlements. We were also distributing 29 kilograms of anchovy once a month to the Jehai community. By 2004, the food supplements were reduced from twice a month to once a month. By December 2008, we were able to stop providing food supplements altogether. The people had learnt how to grow sufficient food so that they no longer faced hunger or starvation at any period during the year.

A Long Term Strategy To Develop Food Security

The long term strategy was to build sufficient agricultural skills among the Jehai to the extent that the Jehai would be able to grow and find sufficient food for their basic needs. This was not easy as the Jehai were nomads of the forest who had little agricultural background. They had no notion of which soils are fertile for food crops. They had no notion of the need to prepare the ground, to clear the bushes and weeds, to turn the soil, to plant seeds, to water the young seedlings, to remove weeds from around the young plants, to protect fruits from insects by wrapping the large fruits such as jackfruit (*Artocarpus heterophyllus*) from being destroyed by insects. We knew from the onset that it would take several years and considerable patience to build their skills to a sufficient level that they would be able to grow sufficient food so that they will no longer face hunger or starvation.

Learning Agricultural Skills

When we met the Jehai, the only food crop that they knew how to grow, was tapioca. A quick assessment showed that the small patches of tapioca plots that they had, would be grossly inadequate for their long term needs. They needed to extend the size of their tapioca plantation and to rapidly extend the number of food plants that they could successfully cultivate. On our second visit to Headman Semerengnoi in Tebang, we gave him a hoe and

some seeds. On visits that followed, we provided the Jehai not only in Tebang but in the other Jehai villages such as Kampung Bush, Kampung Cuweh and Cuweh Anjang, with long knives to clear bushes, hoes to break the ground, short knives to cut stems and short hand held diggers to dig small holes for planting. With regard to tapioca, the success was good. One long term aim was to overcome their inability to plan for long term needs so as to ensure a constant source of food supply that would last throughout the whole year.

The initial attempt to diversify their food varieties with corn (maize) was not easy. These corn seedlings require to be watered, to be kept free from weeds and needed more fertile soil than was common in the area.

It was much easier to guide them on growing fruit trees such as durian (*Durio zibethinus*), rambutan (*Nephelium lappaceum*), jackfruit (*Artocarpus heterophyllus*), and papaya (*Carica papaya*). To ensure that they grew high yielding fruit trees, we provided them with bud-grafted young durian (D 24) cultivars, and rambutan cultivars, and the best jackfruit plants and papaya seeds we could obtain. Such bud grafted cultivars can begin to produce fruit in about three years whereas durian or rambutan grown from seeds take up to 15 years before they fruit, besides the quality and fruitfulness is less than that from cultivars. Within three years of giving Semerengnoi a jackfruit plant, we witnessed that the plant had not only grown to a height of about two and a half meters but it was bearing a large number of jackfruit each of about four kilograms. Within three years of giving out rambutan cultivars, we were able to see the first harvest of fruits.



Figure 12.2 The easiest way to help the Jehai partially secure food supplies, is for fruit plantations to be grown around their villages. A bud-grafted rambutan fruit tree begins to bear fruit within three years of being planted.

Our initial attempts to encourage the Jehai to cultivate vegetables such as long beans (*Vigna sesquipedalis*), egg plant (*Solanum melongena*), and other vegetables was only partially successful. Only a few plants survived as they were not watered, tendered or looked after through weeding. Even when they persisted and were able to grow some food crops, wild animals would, on occasion, enter their plantations and destroy their crops. For example in Desa Ria, large patches of tapioca were destroyed by wild boars. Even when fences were erected, they were not sufficient to protect the plantation against wild boar. On occasions, elephants ventured into their tapioca plantations and destroyed much of the crop. Small patches of hill rice had to be guarded when the grain was maturing as flocks of birds could devastate the whole crop leaving nothing behind.

Exposure To Agriculture Based Semai Orang Asli

We felt that we needed to bring them out of the Temenggor Forest to show them how agriculture based Orang Asli were growing food crops on a scale that ensured food security throughout the year. With the agreement of Pastor Silvanus Tan, we started to try to get the Jehai headmen to send some young Jehai men to Langkap to live for about two weeks among Christian Semai. Eventually, Headman Semerengnoi agreed to let three Jehai young men under the leadership of a Temiar man, who had been to Ipoh and elsewhere in Perak, to visit Langkap and to live with Christian Semai for a two week period principally to learn about agriculture and growing of food crops. The details of this trip have been described earlier in this book. This would be the first of several trips to expose the Jehai to agricultural communities. Such exposure trips were useful but had its limitations.

The next step was to have agriculture based Orang Asli live among the Jehai so that among the many things they could impart to the Jehai, would be the skill of growing some food crops. As mentioned earlier in the book, on 11th November 2001, two women Semai workers moved in to the house that Lepai had prepared for them in Desa Ria. The Semai would grow some food crops as well as teach the Jehai other skills. The transfer of agricultural skills was limited as the Semai were constantly on the move and there was a constant rotation of workers.

Learning Agriculture From The Non-Orang Asli

When the first resident non-Orang Asli worker, Pengiran Ating and his wife Selama moved into Cuweh in late 2003, they were able to settle into their home in Cuweh with long term aims, one of which was to grow vegetables such as long beans (*Vigna unguiculata*), brinjal (*Solanum melongena*), chillie plants (*Capsicum frutescens*), maize (*Zea mays*), ladies fingers (*Abelmoschus esculentus*) and flowers. Their success was a model for the Jehai who were able to observe how vegetables need to be cared for and watered. Pengiran Ating demonstrated to them that even relatively infertile mountain tops under the correct conditions and with careful nurturing and watering of the plants, can be turned into fruitful vegetable gardens. The more difficult task was for the Jehai to be motivated to spend the time and effort to grow these more delicate food crops.



Figure 12.3 The Jehai are now better able to estimate their requirements for food and now grow sufficient tapioca to feed themselves throughout the year.

In early 2006, Henry Luyan settled into Kampung Sungei Tekam, a much more fertile valley of the Singor River. He set about growing food crops with much greater success than was possible in the infertile mountain tops that formed Desa Ria, Tebang, Kerbah, and Cuweh. With an eye for the type of soil that was best for various crops, he began to grow in greater quantities several vegetables including long beans, brinjal, chilli plants, cucumbers and maize. The Jehai and Temiar of Sungei Tekam followed and several vegetable plots sprouted in the village. The most successful was the chllie plantation of



Figure 12.4 Corn (*Zea mays*) is now extensively grown by the Jehai.

Headman Serdang, where he grew about 300 plants of chillie padi and was able to sell the chillies and earn a monthly income of RM 500 per month. He subsequently set about expanding his chillie plantation to 500 plants with the aim of increasing his monthly income to at least RM 800 a month. It was hard work but the dividends were good.

Henry was able to turn a part of the fertile valley of Sungei Tekam into a small padi field where he successfully harvested his rice crop. The most successful crop was the planting of maize. Extensive crops of maize were cultivated by the Jehai not only in Sungei Tekam but in all the Jehai villages.



Figure 12.5 Wet padi field in Kampung Sungei Tekam.

What Is Food Security And What Is Poverty?

Food security refers to the availability of food and one's access to food. A household is considered food secure when its members do not live in hunger or face starvation. In the Jehai context, it therefore refers to the situation where the household is able to grow sufficient food such as tapioca and corn so that the household does not face hunger or starvation at anytime during the year. Food security does not mean that the Jehai household is able to choose what kind of food it prefers such as rice or canned foods. It only refers to the situation where the household does not live in hunger or face starvation. Food security should not be confused with poverty. A food secure household may be suffering from poverty. Poverty is the shortage of common things such as food, clothes, shelter and safe drinking water, all of which determine the quality of life. It may also include the lack of access to opportunities such as education and employment which aid the escape from poverty and allow one to enjoy the respect of fellow citizens.

Food security is achieved in 2008

The long term strategy of imparting agricultural skills to the Jehai took many years to achieve. From a nomadic people, who depended upon the forest for food supplies, they had become sufficiently skilled to grow their own food so that they no longer faced hunger or starvation. By 2007, Lepai informed us that his people were self sufficient as far as food supplies were concerned and he no longer required any supplies of rice. By December 2008, food security had been achieved in all the Jehai villages of Sungei Tekam, Tebang, Kerbah and Cuweh. They were able to grow sufficient amounts of tapioca and corn throughout the year and the Jehai no longer faced hunger or starvation. Despite the sufficient availability of tapioca and corn, some of the people continue to demand gifts of rice and canned sardines from visitors and church groups that come by. However, in terms of the other measures of poverty, the Jehai remain the poorest of the poor particularly in terms of education and employment opportunities and the respect of fellow citizens of Malaysia.

CHAPTER 13 HEALTH, MEDICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Malnutrition, Under Nutrition And Respiratory Disease

We have mentioned that Gomes (1990) estimated that the Jehai crude death rate for 1956-1979 was 3.3 per 100 Jehai per year and that for the period 1978-1988 the crude death rate had risen to 4.5 per 100 Jehai per year, which is the highest recorded for any Orang Asli group in Malaysia, and this is nine times higher than the national crude death rate of the same period. We have also mentioned that at our very first contact with the Jehai on 12th August 2000, three very young children were seriously ill with bronchopneumonia, which is an indication of the very poor health of these children who were also weakened by malnutrition. Several women said that they had not had any food for days and those men who had gone to look for food in the surrounding forests often returned with no food at all. At every visit thereafter for months, we would be confronted with the sick especially the children. Underlying malnutrition and under nutrition were the reasons why bronchopneumonia among the Jehai children was common.

Was there any evidence of tuberculosis among the Jehai? There were reports of a few Jehai who have been treated for tuberculosis in the past in Grik Hospital. On at least two occasions, the writer came across adult women who were coughing blood stained sputum. These were referred to the Perak Medical Department, which sent a health team to the affected villages. In August 2005, the writer received a report from the Deputy Director of Health, Perak, who reported that his team had gone to visit the Jehai villages of Tebang, Kerbah and Cuweh as well as another village called Chiong. Out

of the 183 people the team had examined and taken sputum specimen from, the laboratory did not detect any tuberculosis bacteria in their sputum. Out of 83 adults 73 had evidence of having received BCG immunization and out of 100 children, 91 had evidence of having received BCG immunization against tuberculosis.

Another major problem especially common in children was diarrhoea due to the primitive state of sanitation. There were no latrines and the people used the lake when they needed to defecate. It was a convenient place to do so as the lake provided a source of water for ablution. The lake was also the source of drinking water, which was not boiled, and was also where the women washed their clothes, dishes and pots and collected water for cooking and drinking.

Most nomadic peoples have not developed a system to dispose of human faeces, since they are fairly mobile. In the case of nomadic Jehai, they move every two weeks or so, leaving their waste behind them before the parasites become infective. However, semi-nomadic Jehai, build a base camp from which they make sorties out to the surrounding forest to look for food and to collect jungle products such as rattan or incense wood (*garahu*). Such base camps or villages soon become a source of parasitic helminths such as hookworms, round worms (*Ascaris lumbricoides*) and other parasites.

What Parasitic Diseases Do The Jehai Suffer From?

From the very first contact with the Jehai, we had been treating the Jehai for infections such as bronchopneumonia, intestinal worms, malaria and other illnesses. However, we felt the need to carry out a thorough in depth study of the disease profile of the Jehai so that we would have a strong scientific basis upon which to build the health of the Jehai we had adopted. With the help of Dr Yaya Lilliana Hanapian, an Indonesian doctor who had registered for a Master of Science degree under the supervision of the writer, who was a Professor at the International Medical University, Kuala Lumpur, an in-depth study was carried out on the Jehai, which led to the successful award of the Master of Science degree to Dr. Hanapian (2007). She was joined by a young research assistant, Ling Hua Zen, who graduated, three years later, in medicine from the University of Glasgow.

Concurrent with the focussed research on parasites by Dr Hanapian, we continued our studies on the general health of the Jehai and on the problem of diseases due to environment and water pollution through poor sanitation. In July 2006, the writer accompanied by a team that included seven medical



Figure 13.1 Dr Yaya Lilliana Hanapian collecting blood from a needle prick to the finger of a Jehai child.

students who were studying in the United Kingdom and Dr Hanapian, visited the Jehai villages to collect health information. All the seven medical students were on their overseas electives, part of which was on Medical Missions. They helped to survey the villages, collecting specimen of snails which may be carrier of schistosomiasis, drawing maps and noting the sanitary conditions of the people. At the close of their elective, they returned to the International Medical University, Kuala Lumpur to join Dr Hanapian in assessing the health status of the Jehai. One aim of this mission exposure for the Christian medical students was that this brief experience will touch their lives when they begin to practice medicine and that they would contribute their skill in the future to Christian organizations wherever they eventually practice.

From the various studies carried out most particularly by the field and laboratory studies of Dr. Hanapian, we were able to ascertain and understand how to manage the diseases that affect the Jehai especially the great variety of intestinal parasites, outlined below, that infect the Jehai of the Temenggor Forest. The study was carried out among a cross section of the people living in four Jehai villages. As mentioned earlier, the villages contain mostly Jehai and a small number of Temiar who had married the Jehai. Hence the study contained Jehai, and Jehai-Temiar, and a few Temiar married to Jehai. The sample was made up of all ages with 56 per cent being children below 10 years of age, 11 per cent being aged 10 to 19 years. It will be noted that among

the people, those aged 19 years or younger constituted 67 per cent or two-thirds of the sample, a reflection of the young age of the Jehai population. The number of males and females was equal.



Figure 13.2 Medical students, Jonathan Ling and Aiky Goh, are guided by a Jehai as they conduct a field survey of environmental health problems in a Jehai village.



Figure 13.3 Dr Paul Chen and the research team, Ling Hua Zen and Dr Hanapian, at the International Medical University, are surrounded by seven medical students studying in medical schools in the United Kingdom, who undertook electives in medical missions under the supervision of Dr Paul Chen. They undertook field studies on the health of the Jehai in July 2006.

The Prevalence Of Intestinal Helminths

Whip worm (*Trichuris tricuris*) was found in 71 per cent of the people. Whip worm is a tenacious worm which if not treated can result in bloody diarrhoea and anaemia. Eggs of the whip worm are deposited from human faeces into the soil. After 2 to 3 weeks, they become infective and if ingested infects the person. Each female adult whip worm produces about 5,000 eggs each day, hence if the cycle is not broken, the whole community becomes infected with whip worm.

The eggs of round worms (*Ascaris lumbricoides*) were detected in 24 per cent of the population. Female round worms produce as many as 200,000 eggs per day for a year. These fertilized eggs become infectious after 2 weeks in the soil. They can persist in soil for 10 years or more. Infection is by ingestion of these juvenile larval worms. In their life cycle through the human body, the larval worms pass from the intestines into the blood stream, through the heart to the lungs and are finally coughed out and swallowed into the gut system where they settle down and begin to reproduce eggs. Consequently round worms can cause lung symptoms. However their main effect on the body is the competition for nutrition and is an added factor, like all intestinal parasites, in causing under nutrition and malnutrition leading to a weakened body and bronchopneumonia. Adult worms can measure 15 to 49 cm in length. If the load is very heavy, the adult worms may find their way out sometimes through the mouth or the anus of children.

The prevalence of hookworm infection in the population was 11 per cent. Female hookworms (*Ankylostoma duodenale*) can lay 25,000 eggs per day. The eggs are released into the faeces and live on soil. Embryonated eggs on soil will hatch and mature into filariform larvae. The filariform larvae can then penetrate the exposed skin of a victim and begin a new cycle of human infection. Since very few Jehai wear any footwear, the bare skin of their feet is highly vulnerable to the larvae of the hookworm. In addition to their competition for nutrition, hookworms cause bleeding in the intestines from their sharp teeth. The bleeding can lead to iron deficiency anaemia.

Mixed infection of *Trichuris tricuris* and *Ascaris lumbricoides* was found in 20 per cent of the sampled population, while 25 per cent did not show any evidence of intestinal helminths. This may be the result of constant de-worming with Albendazole once every six months. It also shows that despite the de-worming, reinfection occurs from the highly contaminated soil. Nevertheless, the worm load is kept lower while the people are being educated to dispose of human faeces in a sanitary manner. Albendazole is a

recommended treatment for the intestinal helminths and can also be effective against the intestinal protozoa.

The Prevalence of Pathogenic Intestinal Protozoa

The most important of these pathogenic protozoa is *Entamoeba histolytica* which is responsible for causing amoebic dysentery. This manifests as bloody stools and can lead to amoebic abscess in the liver or occasionally may cause intestinal perforation. The prevalence was 34 per cent, which is very high. One out of every three Jehai carries this pathogen. Like all the other pathogenic protozoon diseases, amoebiasis is spread by ingestion of the cysts through contaminated food or water and poor personal hygiene such as eating without washing contaminated hands. The Jehai do not dispose of human faeces properly, neither do they wash their hands before they eat. Further, water, which is contaminated by human faeces and ablution, is also used as drinking water and for washing and cooking.



Figure 13.4 Dr Hanapian, Dr Paul Chen and Ling Hua Zen, at the research laboratories of the International Medical University Kuala Lumpur, prepare to identify intestinal parasites.



Figure 13.5 Jehai walk about barefooted and the children play in soil that is infested with the infective larvae, eggs or cysts of intestinal parasites thereby perpetuating the cycle of re-infection by intestinal parasites.

Another pathogenic protozoa found among the people is *Giardia lamblia*. *Giardia lamblia* causes diarrhea. The prevalence of Giardiasis was 26 per cent. One out of every four Jehai carries this pathogen.

Blastocystis hominis causes diarrhea, abdominal pain and constipation, and infects man as well as animals, birds, rodents and even fish. The prevalence of *Blastocystis hominis* is a high 91 per cent. It is transmitted through the oral faecal route. The cyst is highly resistant to destruction and is spread through contaminated water.

The fourth pathogenic protozoa that was found to be common among the Jehai is microsporidium. There are numerous species of microsporidia that infect various animals including fish. The microsporidia often cause chronic, debilitating diseases rather than lethal infections. The prevalence of microsporidia was 27 per cent.

A non-pathogenic protozoa, *Entamoeba coli*, was found to be present in 41 per cent of the population. It is a commensal parasite. However it should be noted that this non-pathogenic protozoa is an indicator of the likely presence of other pathogenic organisms which may have been consumed at the same time

The Prevalence Of Blood Parasites

Malaria caused by *Plasmodium vivax* was found to be present in 12 per cent of the population. The other three forms of malaria, namely *Plasmodium falciparum*, *Plasmodium malariae*, *Plasmodium ovale*, were not detected among the people. Monkey malaria caused by *Plasmodium knowlesi*, was not detected in the blood taken from 157 of the people. *Plasmodium vivax* is less virulent than the other forms of malaria and is seldom fatal, but it is the most common cause of recurring malaria. Malaria is transmitted by the Anopheles mosquito which can be found in the jungles of the Malaysian forests. Eradication of the liver stages is achieved by giving primaquine.

Filariasis has been reported among Orang Asli. Mak (1978) reported the presence of *Brugia malayi* infections among the Semai, Semelei, Semaq Beri, Che Wong, Orang Laut, Jah Hut, and Jakun. Hanapian (2007) reported that two out of 157 blood samples were positive for *Brugia malayi* among the Jehai of the Temenggor Forest. The writer clinically diagnosed two adult men with mild elephantiasis among the Jehai of the Temenggor Forest. The low microfilarial rate may be due to the absence of riverine swamp forests and the rarity of the leaf monkey (*Presbytis spp*) in the Temenggor Forest and the absence of domestic cats among the Jehai.

It is a well documented fact that lakes are a source of parasitic diseases particularly the “blood flukes” known as schistosomiasis which is common in countries with large bodies of water such as lakes and rice fields. It is also well established that manmade lakes become a breeding ground for schistosomiasis. *Schistosoma mekongi* is a blood fluke found in neighbouring Thailand and Laos. There have also been reports of *Schistosoma japonicum* in isolated areas in Indonesia. Greer and Anuar (1984) have found schistosomiasis among the Bateq Negrito of Kuala Tahan, Pahang. Mak (1992) has reported the presence of schistosomiasis among Temiar and Temuan Orang Asli. In her study of the people of the Temenggor Forest, Hanapian (2007) using enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) detected that 20 per cent of the 157 blood samples were positive for schistosomiasis. Schistosomiasis usually is a chronic illness that can damage internal organs such as the liver and, in children, can impair growth and cognitive development. It is treated using a single oral dose of the drug Praziquantel annually.

The Prevalence Of Anaemia

Hanapian (2007) examined the haemoglobin levels of 157 of the people in the Temenggor Forest, majority of who were Jehai. She found that the mean haemoglobin level was 9.6 g/dl and that the haemoglobin level for men was 10.5 g/dl (normal is 13.5-17.5 g/dl) and for women the haemoglobin level was 8.7 g/dl (normal is 11.5 g/dl to 15.5 g/dl) and that the haemoglobin level for children below the age of 10 years was 8.2 g/dl indicating that the extent of anaemia was high. This may be due to under nutrition as well as to the high prevalence of *Plasmodium vivax*, and the heavy load of intestinal worms and protozoa.

Providing Medical Care To The Jehai

As mentioned earlier, at the very first contact with the Jehai on 12th August 2000, we were confronted with three very seriously ill children with bronchopneumonia. One child was so severely ill that she was gasping for air and her thin chest wall was being sucked in with each breath. We knew that without help this child would die. Another was being nursed by his teenaged mother, who really had no idea how to look after her very sick child whose eyelids were glued together by a thick layer of pus. The third child was much in the same severe condition. We treated them with oral antibiotics and cleaned the eyes of the child whose eyelids were glued together by a thick layer of pus, and prayed for each child. Their parents were completely opposed to the children being taken to Grik District Hospital. We were most pleasantly surprised on our next trip to see all three children fully recovered.

On our second visit to the Jehai, we were introduced to Kampung Bush and came across another sick child whom we treated. Once again we were told that some of the adults had not had any food for many days. This scene of hungry people and sick children repeated itself at most visits for the rest of 2000. We started de-worming the whole population on our third visit and providing each family with two kilogram of rice and some protein either in the form of ground nuts or anchovy (*ikan bilis*). All the Jehai, except for infants, were regularly treated with Albendazole once every six months. We were fully aware that this de-worming was only a temporary measure and that the long term measure would be environmental sanitation so that human faeces could be properly disposed of. We realized that changing their lifestyle would take many years and that success in changing their lifestyle from a lifestyle of “risk behaviour” to a “non-risk behavioural pattern” would take

persistence and a great deal of patience. It would require us to show the Jehai the benefits before they would accept such a change. This will be discussed in subsequent paragraphs.



Figure 13.6 Throughout the years, Dr ST Chen regularly treated the Jehai and de-wormed all of them to lower the burden of intestinal parasites that the Jehai suffer from.

In addition to treating those who had respiratory illnesses, we treated those with signs of malaria and other infections. Gastroenteritis and diarrhoea was a regular medical problem with grave risks to the lives of the young children especially infants. An important preventive measure was the encouragement of breast feeding. As the use of powdered milk and sweetened condensed milk is invariably accompanied by the use of dirty feeding bottles, dirty water to dilute the powdered milk which may be too diluted for the infant, we strictly prohibited the use of powdered milk or sweetened condensed milk and feeding bottles and strongly encouraged mothers to breast feed their infants for as long as they could. During the period of the nine years reported in this book, there were no bottled fed babies among the Jehai in any of the villages in the Temenggor Forest. As a short term emergency measure for children and adults affected by diarrhoea, oral rehydration salts were given to mothers who were taught how to use them if the children or adults developed diarrhoea. We were fully aware that the long term answer to gastroenteritis lay in teaching and improving personal hygiene, environmental sanitation, safe

water supplies and good environmental health. On most visits to the Jehai, the medical team headed by Dr Chen Siew Tin, became a regular feature over the next eight years.

Long Term Health Measures To Develop Safe Water For The Jehai

We realized that the most important measure that we could try to institute as quickly as we could, would be to try to provide a safe water supply to the Jehai people. It was evident that the Jehai did not use latrines, but passed their bodily wastes at the shoreline of the lake close to their villages. Ablution was easy, as water was readily available at the shoreline. Besides, this is what they had always been doing from ancient times except that it was at the bank of the streams and rivers, now submerged by the manmade lake. Fortunately in the old days, when they were nomadic, they moved every two weeks or so and left the waste behind before the eggs of the intestinal parasites hatched and became infective. Today, with the base camp being built of a more permanent nature, they stayed at such base camps for years, before they moved, if ever at all. Besides, over time, with the deforestation, their traditional lifestyle is doomed to be destroyed as the forest itself becomes totally and permanently destroyed by logging.

A quick survey showed that only a few Jehai families possessed kettles. All the Jehai families possessed at least one cooking pot. Very early in our ministry to the Jehai, we purchased one stainless steel kettle for each Jehai family in all the five Jehai villages we were ministering to, namely, Tebang headed by Semerengnoi, Bush headed by Kasout, Cuweh headed by Charang, Desa Ria (near Air Banun) headed by Lepai and Sungei Tekam headed by Serdang. Fire wood was readily available and the Jehai used wood to cook their meals, hence boiling water was fairly easy to accept. Being aware that boiled water tastes flat, we recommended that if they felt inclined, they could add a better taste to the cooled water by pouring it out from one tumbler to another several times until it was aerated giving it a better taste. Despite this, old habits die hard, and many children and some adults chose to drink from the lake. Four years after introducing the need to boil water in order to prevent diarrhoea, only about 45 per cent of the people were drinking only boiled water while 55 per cent at times drank unboiled water sometime during the day. Nevertheless, the incidence of diarrhoeal diseases was on the decline, and the amount of oral rehydration salts that we dispensed was decreasing with each passing year.



Figure 13.7 Teaching the Jehai to use latrines has been a difficult and slow process. Here we see, in the foreground, two zinc walled latrines in Desa Ria.



Figure 13.8 Jehai women, squatting on a floating platform over the lake at the shoreline close to the village, wash their plates and cooking utensils, and have no choice but to collect water, contaminated by human waste, for cooking and drinking.

Sources Of Water Supply of the Jehai Villages

In 2001, a quick survey of the four Jehai villages showed that three of the Jehai camp communities, namely Tebang, Bush, and Cuweh were all located on mountain tops that lacked a readily available jungle stream. All three villages depended upon the lake for their water supply. We could not find a close by stream from which we could pipe clean water to the people. The only solution was to pipe water from a spot away from the shoreline. The only Jehai village with a piped water supply sourced from a nearby stream was Desa Ria. Later when Desa Ria was relocated, they lost that supply and had to depend upon the lake for water.

The long term need was to change their lifestyle so that most, if not all the Jehai, would be ready to use latrines rather than dispose of their bodily wastes at the shoreline. From past experience, it was clear that this was much more difficult and would take several years to achieve. After much discussion on why proper disposal of human waste was essential particularly to break the cycle of parasitic diseases, Semerengnoi the headman of Tebang agreed to try one pour flush latrine. We dug the ground and built the first latrine using a plastic toilet bowl, with a drainage pipe that led into a covered hole. To use it, the individual had to bring a small bucket of water for ablution and to flush the bowl empty into the covered pit. In March 2001, seven months after our first contact with the Jehai, the first functioning latrine was built and became an example to the rest of the people. The Jehai had much to learn on how to use and maintain it so that it was not dirty or clogged with earth or dirt. But it was the start of the slow process of learning the importance of environmental sanitation. Soon thereafter, a few latrines were being built in all the Jehai villages. However it was a very slow process and much remains to be done.

Pumping Water From The Lake

The water in the lake was deep and still. There was only a very slow flow of water. Hence the shoreline near the settlements was quite polluted since the people tended to defecate on the shoreline close to the settlements as it was a convenient place near to their homes and yet private enough and with an available source of water for ablution. The only solution we could find for these mountain top communities was to pump water from the lake away from the shoreline. By installing a water pump connected to pipes that originated from a floating bamboo platform anchored away from the shoreline was a

simple way to bring in water from the deeper parts of the lake away from human pollution. These were established for Cuweh and later for Desa Ria after it was relocated to its new site away from a stream.

A Piped Water Supply For Sungei Tekam

In early 2006, Henry Luyan, followed by his wife Jennie had taken up residence in the Jehai Temiar village of Sungei Tekam. A hardwood house had been built for him and in April 2006, a hardwood multipurpose building had been completed. It was decided that the whole village should be provided with a piped water system. We would pipe the clean water from a jungle stream about a kilometre away. Water would be distributed to all the houses as well as the multipurpose building. This was completed in July 2006. By early 2008, we found that the water head was not high enough to produce sufficient pressure to sustain the distribution of water to all the houses in Sungei Tekam, in part due to the addition of a few more families to the village. With the gift of three rolls of pipe we extended the pipe upstream by about another 300 feet. The water head was now very good and water was delivered at high pressure to the village. Up to the time of writing the piped system functioned very well and provided Sungei Tekam with plenty of clean but untreated water.

A Piped Water Supply for Kampung Kerbah

As for Kampung Kerbah, the headman of Kerbah decided that the better solution was to relocate the village once again to a better site a little distance away from where Kerbah was sited. In the vicinity of this new site there was a clear stream that cascaded from the mountains and at one place fell over the slope to form a waterfalls. The stream was about one kilometre away from the village. The village of Kerbah moved in January 2008 to the new site. The headman negotiated with a nearby logging company for the pipes. In March 2008, a piped water system was installed to tap the stream at a height that provided sufficient water head to deliver clean water to the people of Kerbah. None of the water was chlorinated as that would have been too complicated for the Jehai to maintain. The system functioned well and was eventually used by JHEOA when they finally, in 2009, began building three new wooden houses for three out of the many households in Kerbah.



Figure 13.9 In Sungei Tekam and in Kerbah, which is shown above, water is now piped from a jungle stream into the village. In the background is one of many kettles provided to the Jehai families. The two women are also collecting water in containers for household use. The child is waiting for her bath. The lake is visible in the upper right hand corner.



Figure 13.10 In order to increase the water pressure to Sungei Tekam village so that the whole village can be supplied, a 300 feet extension pipe was added in 2008. This served to raise the intake upstream to a higher point and thereby increase the water head.

The promise made in 1975 to provide the displaced Jehai with wooden houses was finally beginning to be fulfilled for a few families in two of the displaced Jehai camp communities, about 34 years later. Out of about 17 households and a population of about 100 Jehai living in Kerbah, the JHEOA would build three houses in 2009. Out of another 17 households in Tebang, the JHEOA would build another five houses in 2009. When asked “When will the rest of the people get their houses?” The people said, “We do not know. The JHEOA will come or may not come, as and when they feel inclined”. The houses built by the JHEOA are powered by solar panels and are provided with toilets. The majority of the people will still have to wait for the promise of wooden houses to be built for their camp communities. It may be many more years before the rest of the Jehai ever get their houses. At least for now they have a clean water supply.

The Health Of The Jehai

When we first came across the Jehai in 2000, we were confronted with three seriously ill children suffering from severe bronchopneumonia. They survived that illness and are today thriving as primary school aged children. On subsequent visits, we regularly came across children who were sick with bronchitis, gastroenteritis and malnutrition.

Nine years later, it was rare to come across seriously ill children. Where there were few children, we now saw numerous healthy active children. What struck us was that it was common to come across two generations of mothers all nursing young children. Due to the early age of marriage, it was occasionally possible to meet a grandmother aged perhaps about 45 years nursing her infant. Beside her would be her daughter aged about 30 years nursing her child and on another side, her granddaughter aged 14 years nursing her own little infant.

When I pointed out to one headman, the numerous children in his village, he smiled and said, “God has been good to us and has blessed my people with many children. The Jehai will be a strong people.” In the evening, I heard the Jehai children sing a song, “Jehai Boleh” based on the motto of the government “Malaysia Boleh” (Malaysia can achieve the impossible).



Figure 13.11 After nine years of work among the Jehai, it was obvious that there were many healthy children, and the Jehai headmen, seeing the large number of healthy Jehai children are confident that the Jehai will be a “strong people”.



Figure 13.12 Headman Serdang of Sungei Tekam, was an outstanding leader who led his people in agricultural, health and educational development.

CHAPTER 14

PROMOTING LITERACY AND THE ARTS

Education And Poverty

Broad-based education of good quality is among the most powerful instruments known to reduce poverty and inequality. It is a well established fact that education can help children from impoverished families break out of poverty. Literacy also helps communication and reasoning skills in children. Education also has proven benefits for personal health. Educated mothers are known to have healthier children. Investment in education benefits the individual as well as society. The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that everyone has the right to an education. Unfortunately, proper education is still a distant dream for many Jehai.

Very Few Children Attend The Primary School in Air Banun

When we first came into contact with the Jehai in Tebang, Bush and Cuweh, we found that very few children attended the Air Banun Primary School with its boarding facilities. There were only four children in Tebang who attended school. One was a girl attending Primary Six, another was a boy attending Primary Two and the remaining two were boys attending Primary One. There were no children from Bush or Cuweh, who were attending school. In all three villages, the adolescent boys and girls had not been to school and were now over aged and were no longer eligible to be enrolled in the primary school. No adults could read or write.

The first step we took was to try to encourage them to attend the boarding school at Air Bann. The parents informed us that the children refused to go to school, partly because the other children, and some of the teachers, tended to mock at them for being poor, barefooted, with hardly any clothes, unwashed bodies and unable to read or write when compared with other children. The problem we could immediately handle would be to provide the children with clothes. The school gave them uniforms and books, but not any shoes, clothes, school bag or stationary such as colour pencils, erasers or personal toiletries. The new school term would begin in early 2001 and in December 2000, four months after our initial contact, we were able to persuade 14 children to agree to enrol in the primary school at Air Banun. We provided each with a school bag, shoes, clothes, stationary and personal toiletries such as a toothbrush and soap. The longer term objective would be to prepare the preschool children in preschool classes for a few years before they enter primary school. This would require resident workers living and moving from one village to another and conducting classes for the preschool children. There was also the problem of children of primary school age who refused to attend the boarding school.



Figure 14.1 In December 2000, in order to encourage 14 children from Tebang to enrol and attend the primary boarding school in Air Banun, we gave each child, a school bag, shoes, clothes, stationary and toiletries.

By November 2001, about one year later, Lepai had agreed to build a house for two Christian Semai women to begin the task of teaching the people. Not only would the Semai women workers teach the preschool children, they would also teach the older children who had missed out on schooling and the adult women.

Children of primary school age were keen and came in large numbers to learn to read and write. The learning had to be made attractive to the children. Reading and writing would be interspersed with singing sessions, art work, handicrafts and games. At the break time, biscuits were handed out and progress was good. At the same time, we noted with satisfaction that more and more of the children were enrolling in primary school from all the Jehai villages. For the first time children from Bush and Cuweh were willing to enrol in the boarding school at Air Banun, despite the fact that it often meant that the children were away for months without seeing their parents. However there was always a proportion of school aged children who just would not go to the boarding school. Our strategy to encourage and better prepare the children propelled by the effort of the Semai workers was making a small but positive move forward and more children were attending the boarding school in Air Banun.



Figure 14.2 Despite efforts to encourage the Jehai children to attend the boarding school in Air Banun, many children just refuse to go. As an interim measure, our resident staff, as well as the visiting teams, teach the children as much as they can.



Figure 14.3 Formal teaching has to be made fun. Here Jehai children have fun with coloured paper and coloured pens.



Figure 14.4 Jehai children display their completed art crafts. In the right hand corner is their tutor, Rinnilyn Henry.

Over the period 2001 to 2007, despite the many difficulties, there was a small crop of young Jehai who had completed primary school at Air Banun boarding school and were being prepared for secondary school. However to attend secondary school the children would need to move into boarding schools in Grik about 50 km away from the Temenggor Forest. This itself became another obstacle to the Jehai children.

In early 2006, Henry Luyan and his wife settled into Kampung Sungei Tekam and took over the duties of Pengiran Ating and his wife Selama. The effort of teaching the children intensified particularly in Sungei Tekam. Teaching of children took place in a small thatch hut which served as a community hall and as a temporary school.

The next step was to build the solid hardwood multipurpose building. The group of five experienced Christian workers returned to Sungei Tekam in March 2006 to build a hardwood multipurpose building. They felled hardwood trees and cut these into planks and built the structure out of hardwood. The building could accommodate about 100 people. It would serve as a Centre of Learning for the children and for adults and would be a place for the people to learn songs, dances, music, arts and crafts and serve as a place of worship. With a secure place to begin teaching the children, the teaching intensified and classes were held regularly.

Teaching The Older Children And Women To Read And Write

As mentioned earlier, there was a need to teach the older children, youth and the adults, how to read and write. But we realised that it would be a difficult task. We found that adult men were more reluctant to learn to read and write. On the other hand, perhaps partly due to the fact that the teachers, beginning with the Semai workers, had been women, women were keener to read, write and learn mathematics. Even when Pengiran took over from the Semai workers, it was his wife Selama that did much of the teaching on how to read and write. She was also the one that taught the people songs and dances.

When Henry Luyan took over the duties from Pengiran, once again it was mainly his wife Jennie who taught the children, youth and adults how to read and write. She also taught them songs, dances and games. Hence over the years, the programme to teach the Jehai literacy and the arts was most successful with children and with women. The younger women were especially keen to learn how to read, write, sing songs, dance and learn mathematics. It had much less impact upon the men and male adolescents.

The multipurpose Centre of Learning served well and was a critical factor in the educational development of the preschool children, school going children, adolescent children who had dropped out of school or had not been to school. Adult women, especially the younger ones benefited from the activities at the Centre of Learning.



Figure 14.5 Jehai women learning to read and write at the multipurpose Centre of Learning.



Figure 14.6 Handicrafts are always enjoyed by the Jehai women and girls. Here Teoh Wai Cheng teaches Jehai women how to make bead work crafts.



Figure 14.7 Jennie teaches the Jehai to dance to scripture songs.

Rotary Club Sets Up A Support Centre in Sungei Tekam

The Rotary Club of Bandar Utama, RI District 3300, decided to undertake the setting up of a Support Centre for preschool children in Sungei Tekam. The long term aim was to provide the preschool children with kindergarten type preparation to enable preschool children to be better prepared to enrol in the primary school at Air Banun. However we were faced with the fact that there were about 20 primary school aged children who were not willing to go to the boarding school in Air Banun. Hence, despite the fact the our original aim was only to prepare preschool children so that they would be more willing to go to the boarding school in Air Banun, the programme had to accept that these 20 children needed some simple basic education because they just refused to go to boarding school. Another aim of this Support Centre, funded by Rotary Club, was to give each child a hot meal each school day.

A building was put up by the Rotary Club together with a small kitchen and toilets. After considerable effort to find an appropriate person, a preschool teacher and a helper were finally hired by Rotary Club to run the programme for the children of Sungei Tekam. Chairs, school desks, books and stationary, food supplies and utensils were provided by Rotary Club in support of the programme, which took off in May 2008 after all the facilities were finally put in position under the presidency of Roland Tan and supervision of Janice Lim.



Figure 14.8 The Rotary Club Support Centre for preschool preparation. In the background is the kitchen and pantry. Although the Support Centre was meant to prepare preschool children to enter into the boarding school in Air Banun, out of 32 children only 8 were preschool. The remaining 24 were primary school aged children, below the age of 13 years, who refused to enrol in Air Banun.



Figure 14.9 Jehai children say grace before they eat their meal of noodles in the pantry of the Rotary Club Support Centre.



Figure 14.10 Pour flush toilets with shower facilities for the school children. It also serves the villagers.

Teaching takes place during the school year and follows a five day week from Monday to Friday. Each teaching day begins at 8.00 am and ends at 12.30 pm. At the time of writing, there were 32 children below the age of 13 years, of whom eight were preschool children while the remaining 24 were children of primary school age who just would not go to the boarding school in Air Banun. The sessions were divided into three grades. The first group were the preschool children, the second were children who were barely able to read and write while the third group were the more advanced children. Each day, from Monday to Friday, the children are given a malt drink and a meal of rice and vegetables or noodles and vegetables that was prepared by the helper.

The long term aim of this Support Centre is to focus on preschool children and to encourage the school aged children to attend the boarding school in Air Banun.

School Aged Children In Desa Ria. Tebang, Kerbah And Cuweh

As mentioned earlier, Lepai's children are among the few Jehai who are able to read and write. Lepai's daughter is the first Jehai to complete secondary education and to attend Bible School for one year. With the completion of the

multipurpose building in Desa Ria in July 2006, the preschool children of Desa Ria have been regularly receiving preschool preparatory classes and are well placed to continue to primary school and to a better education. The multipurpose building served as a Centre of Learning for literacy, songs, dances, music, arts and crafts, agricultural skills and health education.

As mentioned earlier, we noticed that none of the school aged children from Bush and Cuweh attended the boarding school in Air Banun. With encouragement a few children began to attend the school in Air Banun. For those who refused to attend the boarding school, we had no choice but to try to teach them a few basics so that at least they could read and write. Despite the inputs from the resident workers beginning with the Semai workers in 2001, we realised that what the children as well as adults needed was a resident teacher living in their midst. The amount of time that a visiting worker can give to efforts to improve literacy in other villages beyond his base has been very limited. We feel that a possible answer is to have a multipurpose Centre of Learning with a resident teacher and a helper to promote the total package of health, food security, literacy, the arts, and the Jehai language and music.

We have tried to promote the concept of multipurpose Centres of Learning for Tebang and Kerbah, and for Cuweh. Repeated attempts to build multipurpose Centres of Learning for the development of the Jehai in these three communities met with obstacles. Consequently the children in Tebang, Kerbah and Cuweh have not advanced as much as in Desa Ria or Sungei Tekam. Nevertheless, because of the encouragement of children to enrol in the primary school in Air Banun, despite many obstacles, some children have attended the primary school and persisted long enough to complete primary school. But the numbers are small and certainly not the 100 per cent advocated by the national authorities. In July 2009, there were 25 children from Tebang attending the primary school in Air Banun. From Kerbah there were eight in primary school, and from Cuweh there were four attending primary school in Air Banun.

Secondary School Education For The Jehai

Few make it to secondary school. Many drop out even if they successfully complete primary schooling. In order to attend secondary school, Jehai children must enrol in boarding schools in Grik about 50 km away from the Temenggor Forest. At these boarding schools, Jehai children face non-Orang Asli children who look down upon them. Most of the few who have enrolled

in secondary school just choose to drop out and to return home. One 13 year old girl, who had escaped from the secondary school in Grik, when asked what she looked forward to, having run away from the boarding school in Grik, mentioned that she was ready to get married. In July 2009, there were a handful from Tebang attending the secondary school in Grik, but there were none from Kebah or Cuweh.



Figure 14.11 Young Jehai women, in Sungei Tekam, learn to use a sewing machine to hem a sarong.

Long Term Aim For The Educational Development of the Jehai

Undoubtedly, the Jehai children must go as far as they can in education. We have yet to see a single Jehai enter into the universities. If the Penan, the former nomadic people of Sarawak, can rejoice that some Penan have graduated from the local universities, it must be our aim to see that the Jehai rise to at least the undergraduate university level. Education provides the people with the opportunity to escape from poverty.

The long term aim of educational development of the Jehai must include the preservation of their language, music, dance and their identity as Jehai. In this light, Christians should understand that the acceptance of Jesus Christ as the God and Saviour of the Jehai can go hand in hand with the preservation of the Jehai language, music, and much of their culture particularly their perception of maintaining good interpersonal relationships between people.

The Population Of Jehai That We Served

The population as of 2009, for all the five Jehai villages that we served, was 474 people. Desa Ria with its multipurpose Centre of Learning catered for 90 Jehai of whom 50 were below the age of 12 years. Sungei Tekam which had the other multipurpose Centre of Learning had a population of 100 of whom 54 were children below the age of 12 years. Tekam also was served by a piped water system.

Tebang has a population of 106 Jehai of whom 60 are below 12 years of age. Kerbah has a population of 90 Jehai of whom 50 are children below the age of 12 years. Cuweh and Cuweh Anjang, has a population of 89 Jehai of whom 43 are children below the age of 12 years.

As mentioned earlier, there is a constant movement of members from one village to another, hence the population is in constant flux. Part of the reason for this constant move is the Jehai custom of visiting and staying with relatives in order to strengthen bonds between families. This constant circulation of people also serves as a mechanism to retain “coolness” of emotions. If any person is upset, he will move away from the person who has irritated him in the avoidance response to “hot” emotions. When all the dust has settled, he will just stroll back as if nothing had happened.

CHAPTER 15

CONCLUSION

What lessons have we learnt from the nine years of association with the Jehai whom we adopted? What are the positive lessons we learnt? Were there any negative lessons that we learnt and wished we had circumvented?

Building Trust And Communicating With The People Group

Perhaps one of the most important lessons we had learnt was the importance of building trust and communicating well with the Jehai. After we had received the vision from God to reach out to the Jehai, it was six months before we began to look for the Jehai in the Temenggor Forest. This gave us the required time not only to pray and seek God's guidance, but also gave us time to find out all we could about the Jehai. In the beginning we found very little. Not much was known of these nomadic jungle dwellers. We could not find anyone who had ever met any Jehai leave alone someone who was familiar with their culture and language.

All we had was what the Bible taught us about being Christ-like and being filled with the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Galatians 5:22 "But the fruit of the Holy Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control. Against such there is no law". In retrospect that was all we needed to build trust between ourselves and the Jehai. Later, we would realise that good relationships between individuals in Jehai culture is built on the fruit of the Holy Spirit. The Jehai perceive that a person who is "cool" is

in a state of satisfaction and with feelings of relatedness to other Jehai and to others. When he is "cool" he has a sense of being autonomous, satisfied physically as when the person is not subject to hunger, thirst, discomfort, or pain. However if the person comes under "hot" emotional stress, the healthy "coolness" is driven out of his body and is replaced by "hot" emotions such as hunger, thirst, discomfort, pain, anger, frustration, hate, jealousy, rejection, resentment, sadness or grief. In such a state when the "coolness" is driven out of his body, the person becomes prone to sickness, accidents and even death. Hence if we as outsiders exhibit the fruit of the Holy Spirit, the Jehai will perceive that we possess much "coolness" and are the Jehai image of a good person. Further, since they perceive that our emotions are like a scent or mist that will mix with the emotions of those close to us, any "hot" emotions will become part of the recipient's emotions. and conversely if a visitor carries much "coolness" the Jehai will receive that "coolness" through the mixing of emotional vapour mists and this will be of emotional benefit to him. If we consistently maintain an attitude of being full of the fruit of the Holy Spirit, we will become accepted as one of the Jehai, perhaps even as a son of the headman.

On the other hand, if for any reason one of our team is prone to impatience, anger or is provocative, or forceful in his mannerism, then we will run the risk of the Jehai withdrawing away in avoidance. Has this happened during our nine years? Yes. More than once, one or another of our leaders was provocative when dealing with the headmen. The provocation produced an avoidance reaction on part of the headmen. The headmen, did not react with anger, as he perceived that that would have placed himself at serious risk of injury or accident if he had gone into the forest. Instead, the injured headman withdrew into his hut and refused to meet the provocateur. It took some time and effort on the part of the leadership to reverse the avoidance reaction of the headmen. Gifts of food are seen as a gift of a part of the giver, hence gifts of food set the pattern for reversing the avoidance reaction of any Jehai who feels provoked by any aggressive behaviour of visitors or team members. The better alternative is to ensure that team members are thoroughly prepared to show only the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Selection of team leaders is critical to maintaining good relationships between the people group and the Christian team. Individuals with a poor character, particularly an angry, proud or highly sensitive person may be quite unsuitable to lead a team to the Jehai or other people group.

The Lingua Franca

When we started, we could not find any person who knew where the Jehai lived. Obviously no one spoke Jehai or could teach Jehai to us. We would have to hope that the Jehai can speak the lingua franca, Malay. We were pleasantly surprised to find out that at least the headmen and many of the men and children spoke three languages namely Jehai, Temiar and Malay. This almost became a disincentive to learn Jehai as we were ourselves fluent in Malay as a lingua franca. Nevertheless, it was important that the Jehai language be preserved and we have set about translating songs into the Jehai language and singing songs to the beat of their bamboo orchestra (*centong*) and incorporating their dances into the singing.

Within a few years, we now have several educated Jehai youth who are able to undertake simple translations. They can teach in Jehai and can translate songs into Jehai.

Understanding And Solving The Problems Faced By the People Group

There are two principal mechanisms to identify the problems faced by the Jehai and the people group we are working with. Firstly, we can read the studies undertaken by various writers. For example, if our concern is about the Orang Asli, then there are a number of excellent books examining the needs of the Orang Asli. A few of these have been listed under the reference section.

A second mechanism is to observe, ask the headmen and to carry out studies. In this book on the Jehai, much of our data concerning the Jehai was from our own studies and observations, supplemented by the research carried out by Dr Hanapian for the degree of Master of Science awarded by the International Medical University under the supervision of the writer. Observation and asking the headman is the simplest yet quite effective means in understanding their cultural norms, beliefs and worldview and in identifying the problems faced by the people group.

One problem that we perceived was the poor state of literacy and the need to ensure that the younger generations of Jehai advanced in their educational achievement. Up to the time of writing, we have yet to obtain permission to set up multipurpose Centres of Learning in Kerbah/Tebang and Cuweh in support of the boarding schools run by the government. Our policy is to set up preschool education to prepare the Jehai to enter government boarding

schools beginning with the primary school in Air Banun. The ultimate aim of education for the people is to enable them to escape the grip of poverty.

Another problem that we observed and heard from the people was the lack of food due to the small subsistence base of the displaced and regrouped Jehai. Providing them with emergency food supplies must always be replaced by developing a means to ensure food security in the longer term. The task of imparting agricultural skills took eight years to accomplish but it was eventually accomplished and food security was achieved in 2008.

The problems that revolve around health were identified by clinical observation, health surveys, and scientific studies to identify the diseases and parasites that infect the Jehai. Once identified, treatment was relatively easy. In all such matters it is important to work with the Health Department. This is exemplified by our collaboration with the Health Department Perak when we suspected that there might be the presence of tuberculosis among the Jehai.

An important factor when dealing with the identification and solving of problems is the need for a strong and focussed leadership. Problems cannot be solved by quick fix techniques or a lack of leadership or a weak and indecisive leadership. This will be dealt with in greater detail below.

Preserving The Language, Music, Dance Form And Ethnic Identity Of The People Group

Like all Orang Asli, the Jehai leadership, is strongly opposed to any attempt to cause the Jehai to lose their identity as a unique people group. Attempts to “mainstream” the Orang Asli through assimilation into Malay society are opposed on the grounds that the Jehai will lose their identity as a people group. It is therefore important that we do as much as is possible to help the people group preserve their identity as a unique people, which in this case are the Jehai people. The preservation of their language as well as much of their culture is important and is compatible with their acceptance of Jesus Christ as their God and Saviour.

We should be cautious not to impose on the people group Western or other non-Jehai cultural norms that have nothing to do with the basic doctrine of Jesus Christ as God and Saviour. For example, the form of their dress. There is no need for the Jehai to discard their cultural headdress (*renun*) made from the young leaves of the palm or the shoulder strap they use as decoration (*tenuak*). The Jehai men sometimes attend worship services in their loin clothes. Neither is there a need to discard their music form or dances even though in the past it was played during the Jehai sewang when the *halaq*

sang songs inspired by dreams and the spirits. We should retain their music form while the lyrics of their traditional songs that address the spirits in their traditional belief system will need to be replaced by scriptural words of praise and worship of Jesus Christ as God and Saviour. This was successfully done and now we have a number of scripture songs in the Jehai language that are of a slow rhythm that fit perfectly with the bamboo orchestra (*centong*) and that can be sung to the accompaniment of dancing to the slow beat of the Jehai music. What makes a song a Christian song is not the music but the lyric. We still have a long way to go. We need to build a better repertoire of Jehai scripture songs praising God. There is yet no Christian literature in the Jehai language and the scripture still needs to be translated. For now the better educated Jehai read the Word in Malay.



Figure 15.1 Henry Luyan and Jennie leading Jehai youth in praising God while retaining their Jehai identity. The team use the Jehai bamboo orchestra (*centong*), headgear (*renun*) and shoulder slung strap (*tenuak*) in this worship service.

The Role Of A Focussed Leadership, Anchors, and Field Captains.

In adopting a people group, we need a focused and strong leadership that will not give up at the first obstacle. During our nine years, there were many obstacles, and each had to be overcome or we would have arrived at a point of surrender. In fact there is a human tendency to lose focus and to give up easily.

Is that why some Christian organizations and churches will not even consider a long term commitment to a people group? Quite a few churches prefer to make short mission exposure trips perhaps a few times a year with a big group of Christians who invade the people group once or twice a year and give out all kinds of good things such as food, clothes, bags of sweets, then sing a few songs, perform a play, preach a short message and bid goodbye until the next visit which may be six months later during some Christian festival such as Christmas. Such trips give the participants a feeling that the participants have done their duty and contributed to the mission work required of God. Nothing really wrong with that if that is all we want.

Some churches take on the long term goal of turning an unreached people group into a self supporting, self propagating, self governing church that fits the definition set out in the Joshua Project. The Joshua Project defines an unreached people group as “a people group among whom there is no indigenous community of believing Christians with adequate numbers and resources to evangelise this people group” The final criteria for re classifying that group is for that group to be able to evangelise its own people. The group must be able to continue the process of evangelism from one generation to the next without much external support. This calls for churches to do more than make occasional mission trips to the target people group. It calls for long term commitment for many years until the people group has a critical number of leaders who are able to evangelise their own people group.

Despite the commitment of several churches to various Orang Asli communities over the long term, there remain numerous Orang Asli communities still waiting for Christians to commit themselves to a long term effort to evangelise the Orang Asli and to support the Orang Asli until they become self propagating churches. Among the Temiar there are a number of communities, in Hulu Perak around the southern part the Temenggor Lake, who want to be Christians, having heard about the God of Peace and Healing, but who remain unreached.

Not only does adopting a people group require a strong and focussed leadership, it requires field captains who will regularly go out perhaps every fortnightly to spend time with the headmen and the people. Captains who can become anchors for the programme of adoption. In our early years, we had one field captain, Joshua Prakash, who was an anchor. He went out fortnightly and spent time with the Jehai leaders and the people. They knew him well and always looked forward to his visits. Joshua Prakash knew the Jehai by name and was greatly accepted by the Jehai. He understood that the Jehai were kind and gentle and he dealt with them in the same spirit of kindness

and gentleness. When Joshua Prakash left, eventually for overseas, we lost an anchor of the programme.

Another important factor in long term ministry to an adopted people group is the role of resident field captains, who live with and transfer skills and knowledge to the people group. In the nine years reported in this book, we had women Semai workers, Pastor Pengiran Ating and his wife Selama, as well as Henry Luyan and his wife Jennie and some of their children, live and work among the Jehai. Not only did they teach the gospel to the Jehai but they also imparted to the people their skills and knowledge concerning how to read and write, music, songs, dance, arts and handicrafts, health education knowledge, how to grow food such as corn, vegetables, fruits, rice and how the growing of chilly plantations can be a source of income. Through their personal example, they showed the people how to live a sanitary and healthy lifestyle that would reduce the risk of disease transmission. Resident field captains are essential particularly in the early stages of touching the lives of the people group.

Wisdom And Tenacity

In order to be able to last out the process, the leadership must have tenacity and wisdom. Just four months after our first contact with the Jehai, we were placed under surveillance by the authorities. We were aware that every move of ours was known to the police, who were regularly waiting for us each time we arrived at the jetty and prepared to board our boat. We were advised to give up visiting the Jehai. We chose instead to be fully briefed on the law and to abide by the law.

The police had absolutely no difficulty keeping surveillance over us, as the Jehai are required to inform the authorities of the visits of all non-Orang Asli to their villages. We were briefed that the law provides that non-Orang Asli may visit during daylight hours but they must leave by dusk. The law also permits tourists and visitors to move freely over the Temenggor Lake south of the East West Highway. We also knew that the headman has the discretion to permit non-Orang Asli to stay overnight if it would be of benefit to the people in his village. The responsibility was his.

To avoid any accusations that we bribed the Jehai to be Christians, we never gave the Jehai any cash. Instead, we provided the Jehai with food supplies, seeds, fruit seedlings, agricultural implements, long knives for clearing the bushes, hoes and other agricultural tools, nails, saws, hammers and zinc sheets to build their houses and community hall, pipes and pumps for

raising water to their homes, kettles, school books, school bags, clothes, shoes, toiletries, educational learning materials readily available in any bookstore, charts on biology, mathematics, pictorial teaching materials, and other useful implements to increase their ability to grow food, build their shelter and to be able to read and write. Throughout the nine years of our work with the Jehai, we had no problems at all with the police.

When we baptized the Jehai, we ensured that each Jehai candidate completed a consent form containing his name and his identity card number if he was aged 12 years or more. We also ensured that his father's name and the father's consent or that of the headman, was obtained in writing for every Jehai below 18 years of age. We ensured that each candidate made a declaration before the headman that he was being baptized on his own free will, that he had never been water baptized before, and that he was not a Muslim. Every form was witnessed by the headman. Every individual was photographed so that each Baptismal Certificate would contain the name, photograph and identity card number of the candidate. At the request of the headmen, each Jehai who was baptized also received a membership card of the church.

As many of us are urban dwellers with little experience of cross cultural mission work, it is always wise to seek a mature partner or adviser who has knowledge of working in similar situations. From the onset we worked closely with Pastor Silvanus Tan of Langkap who proved to be an invaluable partner throughout the years. Pastor Tan initiated many valuable inputs such as the introduction of the Jehai to the outside world particularly to other Orang Asli Christians. He supported the work for years by sending his Semai workers to live among the Jehai. He offered useful advice and proved to be a strong partner. Every long term project needs experienced advisers and partners.

Discipling And Building Leaders For The Future

From the very onset it is essential to begin to build leaders among the younger members of the people group. These are men and women who can take over to lead their own people into the future. We were constantly on the lookout for potential leaders. The better educated children of Lepai turned out to be a good source of young leaders. Several of his children have spent time with Orang Asli Christian families outside the Temenggor Forest. One attended Bible School for a year. Today Lepai's children are the young leaders in Desa Ria and Sungei Tekam. Currently ten Jehai youth are undergoing

training to lead in praise and worship, evangelism, preaching the Word, teaching preschool children and in other leadership roles. Although there is great potential in these young Jehai, the numbers are too few. There needs to be a critical number to propel the work forward. We still need to identify more of these potential leaders in every Jehai village and to raise each to a sufficiently high level to be able to function independently. These young Jehai must be adequately mentored to rise one day to lead the Jehai into the future and to establish a self supporting, self propagating and self governing church. A good field captain and anchor would be ideally placed to carry this out. Undoubtedly much still remains to be done to disciple and build strong Jehai leaders for the future.



Figure 15.2 Four young men, among several youth, who are undergoing training to be leaders of the Jehai.

The Role Of Prayer

The place of prayer cannot be overemphasised. The story begins in August 1994, when one group of seven Christians led by Pastor Jean Lim embarked on a prayer drive around the whole of Peninsular Malaysia. As the group drove on the East West Highway from Grik to Jeli through the traditional territories of the Jehai Dr Chen Siew Tin and the team prayed to God for the salvation of the Orang Asli and that God will send workers to them.

On 5th January 2000, the prayer group of the River of Life Sanctuary received a vision. We knew that the Jehai lived as nomads in the Belum and Temenggor Forests, but how can we locate them? Prayer would have to be our key means to locate them. From January to August 2000, the team prayed fervently for a lead on how we can contact these forest dwellers. On 11th August 2000, the team drove to Grik and that night prayed fervently for God to speak to the Jehai headmen and people in visions and dreams that we were coming to touch their lives and to bring the gospel to set them free. When we finally found the Jehai headman, we were surprised to hear Semerengnoi Kemlin, mention that he had had a strange dream the night before. In his dream he had seen five beautiful colours, namely yellow, black, red, white and green, and he asked us what we thought of the strange dream he had had. We were amazed that in his dream, he had seen the “Five Gospel Colours” and set out to explain to him the meaning of the five gospel colours. Then to the writer’s utter amazement, he said, “I know that God has sent you to my people and I”.

Our nine year experience with the Jehai has been accompanied by numerous miracles of healing and other signs and wonders. For the first year of our visits to the Jehai, there were periods of heavy rain but none fell on us. The rain often fell all around us but not on us. Rainbows would appear instead of rain. We can only attribute all that to the constant prayers that we offered to God. Each road journey from Kuala Lumpur to Grik would take six or more hours and we prayed unceasingly throughout the journey except for the brief stopover. The power of prayer was demonstrated again and again.

When we visited the villages, we worked in pairs with one individual speaking to the Jehai while the other prayed. At regular times we would join the headman in undertaking a prayer walk around his village. We would circle the village seven times singing scripture songs. We can only say that without prayer nothing may have happened. Prayer undergirded the whole programme and must never be neglected.



Figure 15.3 Prayer walk around the Jehai village of Tebang, led by Headman Semerengnoi with Song Sow Fee sounding the shofar.



Figure 15.4 Headman Kawah Charang leads a prayer walk seven times around Kampung Cuweh with the whole village behind him.

Epilogue

If we have, in anyway, conveyed the impression that the work described in this book was or could have been done by any of the team either alone or as a body without the power of God, let me correct that impression and state that the only reason we seemed to have been successful was because of the Hand of God upon His work. We give all glory to Him.



Figure 15.5 The Jehai Gospel Troupe, dressed in a modern adaptation of traditional Jehai clothes, perform and sing Jehai, Temiar and Bahasa Malaysia scripture songs to a combination of traditional bamboo and modern musical instruments.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| <i>Caboh</i> | “Cool” transparent nectar like liquid |
| <i>Cangkul</i> | Hoe |
| <i>Centong</i> | Bamboo orchestra |
| <i>Cultivar</i> | A cultivated plant that has been selected and given a unique name, for example durian D24, because of its desired characteristics. |
| <i>Ethne</i> | Nation or people group |
| <i>Garahu</i> | Rare and highly sought plant exudate of a diseased agila tree. The natural infection produces raw scented exudates that are used to make perfume. One kg of the scented diseased wood, in 2008, can earn the finder RM 2,000. Garahu cannot be produced by artificial infection of the agila tree. Logging will therefore permanently destroy this source of income for the Orang Asli. |
| <i>Halaq</i> | Spirit medium |
| <i>JHEOA</i> | Department of Aboriginal Affairs (Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli) |
| <i>Kampung</i> | Village |
| <i>Karei</i> | The thunder spirit who lives in the black clouds that appear during thunder storms |
| <i>Lingua Franca</i> | Mixed language used as a common language of communication |
| <i>Penghulu</i> | Headman usually appointed by the government authorities |

| | |
|---------------|---|
| <i>Pulau</i> | Island |
| <i>Raway</i> | Soul substance |
| <i>Renun</i> | Headgear made of young palm leaves |
| <i>Sewang</i> | Traditional musical song and dance |
| <i>Tenuak</i> | Shoulder slung strap made of young palm leaves. |
| <i>Yal</i> | Soul of the dead |

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