

Sukarno: 'Endeh first, Jakarta next'

By Wahyuni Kamah

ENDE, Flores, East Nusa Tenggara (JP): "After clearing up the grass in the garden and chatting with my wife and child, my other pastime is simply reading...." wrote the future president Sukarno from Ende.

Sukarno revealed this in his letter dated July 17, 1935, to T.A. Hasan, his correspondent, who lived in Bandung, West Java. His exchanges with T.A. Hasan, the founder of Persatuan Islam, disclosed that Sukarno was a voracious reader and serious learner. He killed the time when he was in exile by reading books about Islam that Hasan sent.

Some of Sukarno's missives from Ende, are compiled in a chapter of *Di Bawah Bendera Revolusi* (Under the Revolutionary Flag) Part I. And the house on Perwira Street in Ende (some people used to call it Endeh) would not have had a historical meaning unless Sukarno, the first Indonesia's President (1945-1965), had lived in it during his exile from 1934 to 1938. He rented this house from Haji Abdul Amburawuh. In the 12x8 house, which was renovated in 1984, Bung (Brother) Karno, as he is affectionately known, lived with his devoted, faithful second wife, Ibu Inggit Garmasih; his sick mother-in-law, Ibu Amsi, who then died in Ende; and his adopted daughter, Ratna Djuami.

"At the time, the roof was made of tin and the wall was made of plaited bamboo," explained Haji Pua Ita Abubakar, 51, the guide to Sukarno's house. "There was no electricity either. They used kerosene lamps for lighting," he added.

The main house that Bung Karno called *Jaya Jakti Pandagara* (the philosophy of a triumph) has five rooms: a living room, Bung Karno's work room, two bedrooms, and a visitors room. Now the living room has become a visitors registration room. A big teak cupboard which stores a private collec-

tion of Sukarno's belongings, a chair, a table, and an extraordinary painting of Sukarno's are placed in this room.

Among his private collection were a violin and a 12-carat platinum ball-point which Bung Karno used to write the Pancasila concept. In the work room some photographs portraying Bung Karno's activities in Ende hang on the wall.

In Bung Karno's bedroom, there was only one big teak cupboard and an old-style iron-framed bed, equipped with a mosquito net. The bed and the cupboard were brought from his wife's home in Bandung.

Kitchen, toilet, warehouse, and WC, which are separated

Flores," said Abubakar, who has been the guide since 1982.

His life in Ende was gloomy. During his first months in exile, Bung Karno did not feel secure. Because of his reputation as a political prisoner, the local people did not want to make friends with him nor talk to him, "It were as if he had an infectious disease," said Ibu Inggit in the book *Kuantar ke Gerbang. Kisah Cinta Ibu Inggit dengan Bung Karno* (I Take You to the Gate. A Love Story of Ibu Inggit and Bung Karno). Moreover, the days that Sukarno had to endure during his exile were difficult ones.

"He was lonely and confused," she said in the book that was written by Ramadhan K.H. It was his wife's strong support and assistance that kept Sukarno fighting. Therefore, Bung Karno thought that he had to find

portrayed his brilliant ideas about Indonesia's future. The painting itself was set in Bali. It pictured four men sitting in four different religious costumes which symbolized four religions in Indonesia at the time, namely Islam, Catholicism, Hinduism, and Buddhism, as they worshiped One God. The painting also depicted a bull, a rice field, a banyan tree and a cotton plant. These became symbols of the now accepted Indonesian ideology, Pancasila. The painting still hangs on the wall in the living room.

The future leader's ideas about Indonesia's independence were mostly born in this house. Sukarno formulated his ideas about Pancasila, the state ideology, in Ende. "Endeh first, Jakarta next," he declared. He wrote the Pancasila concept under the *sukun* (artocarpus)

spond with his friends and associates in other towns and lands, the Dutch colonial government thought that Bung Karno's movement was starting to jeopardize the state. Then he was exiled to Bengkulu, Sumatra. The news of this was first heard from a radio news broadcast in a Chinese merchant's shop and it was delivered to him by his tailor, Darham.

Bung Karno and his family left the house on October 1938. The house was then returned to the owner and his belongings there were shared among his friends.

After having been inaugurated as Indonesia's President in 1945, Bung Karno revisited "his" house three times, in 1951, 1954, and 1957. He declared the house a museum in 1954.

When asked about the house's visitors, Abubakar, who only earns a Rp 40,000 monthly honorarium, said that most of Sukarno's children with Fatmawati, his third wife, have already visited the house. There were also some former Cabinet ministers, as well as domestic and local tourists.

Sukarno had five children with Fatmawati: Guntur Soekarnoputra, Megawati Soekarnoputri, Rahmawati Soekarnoputri, Sukmawati Soekarnoputri, and Guruh Soekarnoputra. His other children were Taufan Soekarnoputra (with his fourth wife Hartini) and Kartika Soekarnoputri (with his fifth wife Dewi Soekarno). He had no children from his marriages with Inggit and his first wife Siti Utari, the latter union lasting only a year.

When a big earthquake struck Flores in 1992, many houses in and around Ende were damaged and ruined. However, the decent old architecture of Bung Karno's exile house stood firm. According to Abubakar, it was because the house was blessed by Bung Karno's spirit.



Kuantar ke Gerbang

Before moving to Bengkulu, Bung Karno and family visited the grave of his mother-in-law, Ibu Amsi, who died in Ende. He was surrounded by friends from a theatrical group.

from the main house, were constructed one year after he began living there. In the backyard there is a well whose water source always springs even in a long drought.

"Visitors often take water from this well as a souvenir," said the guide of Flores-Bugis descent.

"The Dutch colonial government wanted actually to exile Sukarno, the young, energetic political activist at the time, to Bejawa, another town in the west of Ende, but Sukarno rejected this. He only wanted to stay in Ende, the capital of

friends among the local people.

Later, the man that was called Indonesia's greatest orator found his world in art. He was active in theater. With his friends, Bung Karno founded a theater group called Keli Mutu where he played the violin.

At a young 34 years of age, Bung Karno was also a talented artist.

From 1935 to 1938, he wrote some 27 drama scripts, one of them entitled *Year of 1945*. The main theme of his scripts was Indonesia's independence and patriotism.

He also did a painting, which

tree, which was situated about 500 meters from his house.

Sukarno was also a spiritual man. He had his own prayer room near the backyard for meditation. This activity led him to be an intuitive man. The traces of his two palms, chin, and soles are slightly imprinted on a small, cement-floored room.

"Bung Karno could spend hours when he was praying. He did not want to be bothered by anybody even by important visitors," explained Abubakar.

During his "given freedom", which allowed him to have visitors, to read books, and to corre-