

CHAPTER II

General Transport Conditions in Beserah

In describing the general transport conditions in the mukim of Beserah, the important aspects to be studied are the road pattern, the various means of transport and the organisations or operators providing transport services. A description of these aspects will be the subject matter of this chapter.

A. Road Pattern in Beserah.

The most important road which serves the mukim of Beserah is the section of the trunk road link running from Kuantan - Kuala Trengganu - Kota Bharu, called Route III. This route is connected with the west coast by the road link running from Kuantan to Kuala Lumpur and Port Swettenham.¹ The Kuantan - Kuala Trengganu - Kota Bharu road runs through the mukim serving its densely populated settlements.

With the introduction of rubber for small farmers the economic importance of the trunk road has greatly increased. Rubber farmers and dealers depend on the road to send their rubber to Kuantan for sale.

1. See Map 1 on page 5.

Another road² links Kuantan with rubber estates to the north. One of these estates is situated in the mukim while another is partly outside. However, this road and its branches serve only the rubber estates. The economic significance of the road lies in the fact that it was originally constructed to serve the estates.

Besides the trunk road, Route III, earth-roads can be found in the area, which serve the need for intra-mukim transportation. Some of these are passable for motor vehicles; others can be used only by carts and bicycles. Cart tracks are also numerous in the mukim. Bridle-paths and footpaths connect houses with houses and villages with villages. The majority of the above-mentioned tracks and paths are linked to the trunk road.

As far as road transport is concerned in the area and in its relation with other centres, the length of roads and other kinds of tracks and their locational distribution are sufficient to satisfy the need of producers and consumers. In fact the traffic intensity of vehicles per day along the trunk road is very small compared to the estimated intensities of about 2,000 vehicles per day occurring on the main road in the Federation.³ The vehicles which

2. See Map 2 on page 14.

3. Williams, F.H.P., Report on Road and Road Problems in South East Asia and the Caribbean, (H.M.S.O., London, 1957), page 3.

really carry goods for the maki form only a small portion of the traffic flow along the trunk road.

8. Means of Transport.

In the east coast region and, in fact, in most rural areas in Malaya, the most primitive means of transport can be found side by side with the modern ones, ranging from porters to motor lorries. The following are the main transport means common in Beserah.

Porters and pole-carriers⁴

Human portage is a form of transport which dates back to time immemorial. The most common type of porter is the pole-carrier who carries loads in two wicker baskets balanced at both ends of a pole. Or two persons may carry a load in a big basket hung to the middle of a pole and both of its ends supported by carriers. Pole-carriers usually carry fresh fish for perais (fish-dealers)⁵ and others from landing places to collecting centres, especially at Kempong Di-Pantai Beserah.

Buffalo-carts⁶

Buffalo-carts are used mainly to haul fish from landing places to fish curing sheds and also from there to the store-houses.

4. See Plate 1 on page 57.

5. These are small dealers of fresh fish who buy a catch of fish or a part of a catch from fishermen on the beach at Beserah. They then sell their fish to retailers in Kemutan and other inland towns.

6. See Plate 2 on page 57.

Furthermore, they are used to carry other commodities such as attap, planks, firewood and other bulky materials. Usually they are engaged in short-distance transportation within the area. In the mukim there are six buffalo-carts, five of which are owned by Chinese tenants and one by the Kampong Di-Pantai Besarah Cooperative. The importance of buffalo-carts lies in the fact that they can travel on sandy and soggy ground which is a common geographical feature in the hatched area of Besarah. They are sturdy vehicles having a maximum capacity to haul 7 piculs⁷ of load.

Bicycles

Another common means of transport is the bicycle which is fitted with an elongated rattan basket at the back having a capacity to carry about 130 katis of load.⁸ There are large numbers of bicycles in the area and they are used to carry heavy and often bulky loads. Ferriks, fruit sellers, rubber farmers, etc. use bicycles for short-distance haulage. In other words, bicycles play an important part in the intra-mukim transportation system.

Motor-vehicles

Motor-vehicles are the most important means of transport in the haulage of commodities between the mukim and other marketing centres, e.g. Kuantan and Kuala Lumpur. Some are also used for

7. One picul (100 katis) equals 133 1/3 lbs.

8. See Plate 3 on page 58.

carrying goods within the maki, for instance the two auto-cycles owned by perakis; they are fitted with small rattan baskets at the back with a carrying capacity of about 50 katis.⁹ Vans and lorries are the common means of transport for non-local haulage. In addition, it is curious to note that in this area buses and taxis¹⁰ are extensively used for the hauling of goods besides passengers. Private cars are also important. The vehicles described above haul a wide range of goods, from fresh fish to "imported" consumer goods.

C. Transport Operations and Organisations.

Vehicles operated by people living in Beserah - the small operators - are engaged in either private or private-cum-public operation. The former is the operation by which the vehicle is used for carrying goods only for its owner, and it possesses a class 'C'¹¹ haulage permit from the Road Transport Department. The latter operation involves the carrying of goods both for the owner and for other in return for payment, and it is given a class 'B'¹² haulage permit. An example of the first type is a van

9. See Plate 4 on page 58.

10. Taxis carry goods for hire in their boots. This is illegal. However, some buses possess permits to carry goods for hire.

11. See Appendix II on page 56.

12. Ibid.

belonging to a peraih who uses it to carry his fish from Beserah to Kuantan. But often he illegally carries goods for others for payment. The cooperative van is an example of the latter type of transport. It hauls goods both for the Cooperative and people who require its services.

Public- or common-carrier, lorries belonging to operators from outside the mukim - e.g., the two lorry transport companies with offices in Kuantan whose lorries play an important part in the transportation of dried fish from Beserah to Kuala Lumpur - provide transport services to the Chinese dried fish dealers in Beserah. They possess class 'A'¹³ haulage permits.

The buses which ply along the trunk road serving Beserah and adjoining areas to the north possess class 'A' haulage permits to carry goods besides passengers. The one bus which goes between Kuantan and the road terminates at Kempang Di-Pantai Beserah does not have permit to carry goods. Nevertheless, it illegally does so without qualm.

Vans belonging to the wholesalers in Kuantan are operated as private vehicles. The same applies to the vans which distribute branded goods from, say, Kuala Lumpur or Singapore.

The buffalo-cart is used as a private transport means by the owner. But the driver of the buffalo-cart is allowed to carry goods for others also as long as this does not conflict with the private

13. Ibid.

transport demand of the owner. He is not paid a salary but works on piece rate and, in return for the upkeep of the draught animal, he is allowed to use the cart to render services for public haulage, the rewards being an addition to his wages.

As far as bicycles are concerned, the majority are used privately. The 11 perahs in Beserah carry fish for themselves. There are only two bicycle-operators who operate as public carriers for the Seberang Che' Lat Cooperative.

Table 1 below will give a rough idea of the categories of vehicles which are connected wholly or only in a very small part with Beserah in the regular haulage of commodities.

TABLE 1
NUMBER OF VEHICLES OF DIFFERENT
CATEGORIES CONNECTED WITH THE
HAULAGE OF COMMODITIES IN THE MUKIM OF BESERAH

Types of vehicles and organisations	No. of vehicles with different haulage permits		
	A	B	C
1. <u>Lorries</u>			
(a) Limited companies	21	-	-
(b) Sole-proprietors	4	-	-
(c) Estates	-	-	3
2. <u>Vans</u>			
(a) Cooperative	-	1	-
(b) Perah (private)	-	-	1
(c) Wholesalers	-	-	12
(d) Branded goods distributors	-	-	unknown
3. <u>Buses</u>	2	-	-
Total	18	1	15

The above table needs some explanation. In addition to the number of vehicles above, there are taxis and private cars used for the haulage of commodities.

The majority of the vehicles listed do not carry goods for Beserah alone. In most cases the carrying of goods from or into Beserah form only a small portion of their operations. For instance, the lorries belonging to the limited companies are used for the haulage of goods along Kuala Lumpur-Kuantan-Kuala Trengganu route, i.e. Routes II and III, and as such goods carried for Beserah forms only a very small portion of the total volume handled by the lorries. The significance of lorry-transport lies in the fact that regular services can be obtained for the purpose of hauling goods from Beserah.

The same principle as mentioned above applies to the case of wholesalers' vans. Beserah is one of the many distributive centres for the wholesalers in Kuantan. Branied goods distributing vans are in the same category. Buses carry goods both for Beserah and adjacent areas.

Only the cooperative van and the peraih's van are almost solely used for the haulage of goods along the Kuantan-Beserah route. Thus it can be concluded that, with this exception, motor vehicles serve the main as only one of the many markets where demand for transportation services is rendered by them.



JERAM ESTATE

ROUTE III

BATU HITAM

MAY ESTATE

CHINA

SEA

SEBERANG CHE' LET

KAMPONG BIPARTAI
BESERAH

ROUTE IV

PELINDONG

PELINDONG
YENCAH

KUANTAN

KUANTAN R.

ROUTE V

MAIN ROAD

SUBSIDIARY ROAD

EARTH-ROAD &
TRACK

TRUCK BOUNDARY

SCALE 1 MILE TO 1 INCH

