

## REPORT ON AUSTRALIAN VISIT NOVEMBER 2008

From the middle of November until early December, Sugandi, Robert, Judy and Asmaniah visited Darwin, Brisbane, Sydney and Sydney Northshore, Canberra and Melbourne, with a visit planned to Perth after the Australian congress. This was the first international helper visit in many years, giving rise to questions as to why we were coming, so an explanatory letter was emailed to the groups.



Sugandi and Judy flew in to Darwin, the northern-most group, which is geographically closer to Indonesia than other groups in Australia! The four of us then met up in Brisbane and continued our trip, finishing in Melbourne.

We found that many of Bapak's guidelines were not being followed –attendance at group latihan was low in many groups, helpers' latihan and helper/committee latihan were not happening as frequently as ideal and in some cases not at all. So, much of the testing we did concerned these core issues. How is it for my inner growth and development if I attend latihan once a month, twice a month, once a week, twice a week, twice a week and once at home; how is it when I can't get to latihan if I just miss that one and how is it if I do a latihan at home. What is the purpose of the helpers' latihan, helper/committee latihan. There were many other tests that came up: about criticism – what it is in me that gives rise to critical feelings and how to deal with this, forgiveness of self and others, asking Almighty God for forgiveness; the state of the world and how we can best be in these times; how our character was before we were opened and how we behaved if someone upset us, how it is now, and how it is for a person who has become a true human being; how it is for

our family/community if we are diligent in our latihan; how we acknowledge in our lives that we are Subud members and how we could best do this...

In each group we met with the helpers, men and women together, and spent some time talking before doing latihan and testing about their particular issues. We tested questions such as how it is to act as a helper on one's own and how as a member of the dewan, about the men and women forming a single dewan and how it feels to be working in a dewan which is functioning according to Bapak's vision. In some helpers' groups we witnessed the contribution that each person made to the dewan, in others it was each person witnessing who ... is, and in each case there seemed to be a fresh understanding and enthusiasm to work together. Some groups still had problems to solve and we tested about how it was to let the problem continue compared with how it was to face the problem with courage. We talked about breaking things down into sizeable chunks – the zat, sifat, asma and affal Bapak talked about – intention, preparation, work and result or outcome. So being clear what the intention was, doing preparatory testing and talking about how to deal with it, and then putting that guidance into practice.

We visited two enterprises, the Gunnebah conference centre southwest of Brisbane, and 72 Erskine Street in Sydney, a Subud information centre and performance/art gallery space. In each case we were able to give support and do latihan and testing with the members running them.

We spent a day with the national helpers, looking at Subud Australia's situation but also taking the opportunity to do personal development work together. The idea of a regional/national helpers'



*72 Erskine Centre  
Asmaniah, Judy, Robert, Sugandi and Dablan*

workshop over a weekend came up more than once, most likely in the middle of 2009.

With Judy as the roving ambassador for the New Zealand congress in 2010, in each group we talked and tested about the world congress – the significance for the growth and development of Subud, how it could be if truly supported by the membership, how it was for the Congress Organising Team at this time (really hard yacka, as they say downunder) and how it could be if everyone was truly supporting them in their work. We also tested about the nature of New Zealand and went on to feel about some other countries, including Australia of course.

It was during this trip, after testing with Robert and Sugandi, that Mason resigned. Following careful preparation by testing as to how to go about filling this position, Dahlan Simpson from Sydney was chosen. The whole Area 1 dewan wishes Mason well in his life and thanks him for his valuable contribution over the last three years. We welcome Dahlan, who joined us in Melbourne at very short notice, and look forward to working with him in the coming months.

We would like to thank all groups for their very warm welcome and generous hospitality and ask forgiveness if we did anything that was out of place during our time with you.

Asmaniah, Judy, Dahlan, Robert and Sugandi  
International Helpers in Area 1