TRADITION OF PETANG MEGANG AND ITS INFLUENCE IN CHANGING THE SIAK RIVERSIDE IN PEKANBARU

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ABSTRACT

Siak River is the main river in the capital city of Riau Province, and it plays a vital role in the history and the development of the city of Pekanbaru. People use the river as the source of water, transportation, and even the traditional ceremony of Petang Megang, which indicates the close connection of Pekanbaru people with the river. The Siak riverside is the center of the city, with the old town, markets, settlements, and the royal house located near the river. The community's attachment to the river can be seen through Petang Megang, which is known as a tradition to clean and purify the body and soul to welcome the holy month of Ramadan. During Petang Megang, many people go to the river, perform mandi balimau and even hold competitions and festivals that attract tourists. This paper discusses how Petang Megang reflects the connection of local people to the river and influences the spatial form of the Siak riverside. The findings show that since there are some changes in the practice of Petang Megang, such as boat competition and music festivals, the government develops the Siak riverside not only to accommodate Petang Megang but also to attract tourists. Unfortunately, the development limit access of local people to the river.

Keywords: Infrastructures; Petang Megang; Riverside; Spatial Form; Transformation

1. INTRODUCTION

Siak River is located in Pekanbaru, the capital city of the Riau Province. It is vital for transportation, economic, and even cultural developments of the city of Pekanbaru. As the deepest river in Indonesia, people in Pekanbaru use the river to connect cities and regions. The river stretches from West to East, connecting the city of Bukittinggi in West Sumatra to the Malacca Strait. There are many settlements, government centers, historical sites, markets, and trading centers alongside this river. People in Pekanbaru are also closely related to the Siak River in their daily lives.

From its geographical condition, the Siak River also divides the city of Pekanbaru into two parts, the northern part of the river – a basecamp of the Caltex Oil Company– and the southern part of the river – as the old city. The riverside is known as a historical site as well as a trading center. Pekanbaru is located in the middle of Sumatra Island with the Siak River as the main transportation route; it makes Pekanbaru known as a transit city and a trading port in Sumatra.

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Figure 1 shows the strategic location of the Siak River and the position of two important bridges that connected the northern and the southern part of Pekanbaru. The addition of infrastructure strengthens the meaning of Pekanbaru as a transit city for many Sumatra regions, including Malaysia and Singapore. As a transit city for local and regional trading, the government provides some infrastructure to help traders do their business. Some of these infrastructures are new ports, streets, and commercial buildings such as the central market in the riverside areas to accommodate the growing activities near the Siak River. People living near the river also do some activities such as bathing, washing, fishing, and even traditional ceremonies that connect people and the Siak River. There are also some bridges located over the Siak River and a new toll road, Trans-Sumatera Toll Road, connecting Aceh Province in the North to Lampung Province in the South of Sumatra. In short, the Siak River is significant for the city, and the riverside areas become essential infrastructure for people in Pekanbaru.

The Siak River, Pekanbaru, Riau Province, Indonesia

Figure 1. Maps of the Siak River in Pekanbaru, Riau (source: authors' illustration)

The area between Siak Bridge 1 and Siak Bridge 3 is a dense area where people do their daily activities. The old city is located in this area, including the Sultan of Siak lives and the oldest commercial buildings. Several old buildings located in the area are parts of Malay architectural heritage, and they have high historical and cultural values. Besides, there are some trading centers and settlements in the area.

Studies of urban places have evolved from understanding the relationships among urban forms, activities, and imagery (Montgomery, 1998) to include human behavior and social construction (Morgan, 2010). Architectural historian Spiro Kostof used the term "city process" to remind city planners and designers of a never-ending process of becoming an ideal city (Kostof & Castillo, 1999). He asserts that patterns and elements of the city are formed by social, political, economic, and cultural forces built through the historical process. Here, the city's physical form can never be separated from the social contexts, as a matrix organized in daily life.

A combination of urban forms, user activities, and meanings people give to the place create a meaning place in urban space (A. S. Ekomadyo et al., 2018). Human factors such as social and cultural beliefs, traditions, and religious practices may contribute to the spatial forms of the built environment (Al Husban et al., 2021).

Petang Megang is one of the original traditions of Riau Province, which symbolizes a connection between people and the river. This tradition includes cleansing and bathing processions or called *mandi balimau*, conducted before the holy month of Ramadan (Moekahar, 2018). This ceremony attracts people living in Pekanbaru and the surrounding areas to come

and join the tradition. At first, this tradition has a focus on cleansing and bathing activities. Later on, people in Pekanbaru celebrate Petang Megang as a big festival and add some new activities such as Boat Festival, traditional competition, and visiting the historical site and old tombs near the Siak River.

Like most traditions, Petang Megang also has some changes over time. There have been some changes in how people use the riverside and how people connect to and value the river, seen through Petang Megang. Previously, people in Pekanbaru focused more on the tradition of mandi balimau and gatherings to maintain the relationship among community members. During the Petang Megang ceremony, the cleansing and gathering activities take place on the riverside. During mandi balimau, some people take a bath in the river. Now, the tradition of Petang Megang is more like a big festival. Even though some people still take a bath in the river, most people gather on the riverside areas to see the Boat Festival and other government-supported activities. The local government develops the riverside to accommodate Petang Megang by building additional infrastructure near the river, making a new park below the Siak Bridge 3 to accommodate Petang Megang. This development merges with the importance of Pekanbaru's historical sites. In 2015, there are approximately 5,000 people attended the Petang Megang ceremony (Republika, 2015). This fact proves that Petang Megang invites local tourists to come to Pekanbaru. Since more people use the riverside during Petang Megang and the fact that tourists give some income to the city, the local government build some new infrastructure utilized by the community to carry out this tradition.

Previous studies on the Siak riverside suggest that the area's development should be connected to the physical characteristic of the area, such as aesthetic and health aspects (Suryadi et al., 2016). Some studies relate the development of the riverside with social and cultural contexts (Cheris & Repi, 2017), but it is important to relate more to local contexts like traditional festivals. Some researchers on the Siak River are mainly associated with the Dutch colonial era and the impact of oil industries in Pekanbaru. This research tries to occupy a void in the research of Siak riverside and cultural activity Petang Megang.

The research conducted for this paper is related to Petang Megang that is held on the Siak riverside areas, especially near the Siak Bridge 1 and the Siak Bridge 3. As one of the oldest places in Pekanbaru, this area has more population and historical buildings than other Pekanbaru areas. This paper argues that Petang Megang affects the spatial forms of the Siak River riverside. Through the practice of Petang Megang from time to time, this paper analyses how people use the riverside area and how the development of Petang Megang influences the condition of the Siak riverside. This paper elaborates on some developments in the riverside areas in relation to the tradition of Petang Megang that also attracts local tourists.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. The River as an Important Infrastructure for the City

In many civilizations, people tend to choose a place that is the activities center of a region. Settlements often appear at a strategic location, at crossroads, or other locations with easy access, for instance, near rivers, roads, trains, or airports (Sevtsuk, 2012). These locations will allow their economic, cultural, and social activities. Over time, people start to build infrastructure near these locations. People begin to build dwellings, settlements, and infrastructures where they will do their daily activities, and these activities will influence the physical structures of the cities. But they also decide what these structures mean for them and how to use the built (Gibson, 2015). At this point, the city infrastructure plays a role in influencing the city's activities and vice versa.

Development of infrastructure in the cities will bring stable growth to the cities. This process takes time and may create a transformation to the areas. A development generates more activities in the region, meaning that some new buildings and infrastructures are built and even transformed a region. A transformation is a change of appearance, whether in form, character, or function (Wasnadi & Ellisa, 2019). The change certainly follows the needs and actions of human beings. The uses and meanings of spaces connect people to cities and make cities distinct from one another. A distinctive character of space distinguishes one place from another, which is seen as the uniqueness of the place (Norberg-Schulz, 1979). Built environments, whether cities, neighborhoods, or housings, have a role in influencing and shaping space's human activities (Black & Street, 2014; Gibson, 2015). Community activities and even habits and traditions of people will continue to grow and influence the built environment. Therefore, any change in the activities will eventually change the city.

Water resources have also played an essential role in most of the civilizations in the world, and throughout history, the settlement along the water resources become the center of human activities and with their own distinctive identities (Kürkçüoğlu & Akin, 2013; Timur, 2013). The oldest civilization is developed near the river because the river provides drinking water, transportation, agriculture. In the beginning, people who live on the river's banks build their settlements following the river that give them accessible transportation networks and irrigation for plantations. This kind of settlement has orientations towards the river (Havránková, 2014). Rivers provide water and other natural resources, and they also help connect communities and even create recreation opportunities. Rivers also bring comfort to humans, both physically and psychologically, and some traditional ceremonies are held to symbolize the connection between people and the river. Besides their functions in supporting lives, rivers have some aesthetics qualities that promote riverside areas to become tourist attractions. Urban planners now incorporate green spaces, such as urban forests and riverside parks, as a form of "green and blue" infrastructure that supports public and ecosystem health (Vollmer & Grêt-Regamey, 2013).

2.2. The Connection of Pekanbaru People with the Siak River

There are some explanations for the name of the Siak River. The name of Siak derives from local plants or bushes that grow near the river in the location of the former kingdom of Siak. That is the meaning of the word "siak-siak," taken for the kingdom's name. Local people in Riau usually use this kind of plant as medical and fragrant ingredients.

Siak River has a length of 370 km and connects several districts. The Siak River goes across Pekanbaru, and this city becomes a well-known transit port for traders from West Sumatera and Malacca. The Siak River is one of the four main rivers in the Riau Province and the deepest river in Indonesia, with an average depth of 20-30 m (Yuliati et al., 2017). Siak River has a long history as the heart of human settlements in Sumatra, even before the colonial era and the mining exploration (Onrizal & Mansor, 2020). However, now, the Siak River's depth is only between 8-12 meters (Sumiarsih, 2017). The emergence of factories and industries and domestic activities around the Siak River causes the river to lose its natural qualities (Onrizal & Mansor, 2020).

Siak River plays a huge role in the development of Pekanbaru city. Historically, Pekanbaru City is one of the towns that emerges from the river. The area is the core area of Pekanbaru municipality, formerly known as the Senapelan area (Depdikbud, 1977). In the eighteenth century, the Senapelan region was located on the Siak River banks and became a market for Minangkabau traders. Over time, the area has been developed into a crowded residential area and transit for shipping. The development of Senapelan was also very closely related to the development of the Kingdom of Siak Sri Indrapura. In 1762, Pekanbaru was established as the

Siak kingdom's capital, a separate part of the Malay empire after the Portuguese conquered Malacca in the sixteenth century (A. S. Ekomadyo et al., 2018). During this time, the function of the Siak River as a transportation route had significantly increased.

Figure 2. How Pekanbaru's peoples use the Siak River
Source: (Dispusip Pekanbaru, n.d.)

For several centuries, the Siak River was the center of Pekanbaru city, as depicted in Figure 2. As a transit city for traders, the government tries to provide some infrastructure to help traders do their business. Infrastructure development and the arrival of traders from various regions make the waterside area crowded. Many traders start to build houses and buildings for their trading activities. Government builds some infrastructure such as ports and markets alongside the river to accommodate the growth in the economic sector.

2.2. The Tradition of Petang Megang

There is usually a connection between people and the river that has to support the city and the community. This kind of connection can be seen through habits, cultural rituals, and traditions performed by the community. By conducting habits and traditions, people turn space into a meaningful place. In the context of the river, habits and traditions are an attempt to show and symbolize the relationship between people and the rivers. To understand the connection between people and the river, it is necessary to identify the community's place attachment to the river. The concept of an attachment to a certain place (sense of place) can be understood as the quality of human connection with the area. Sense of place is also a combination of characteristics that make a place special and a unique experience on landscapes, local knowledge, and traditions about the site (Aziana et al., 2016).

Each city has its unique character and identity that differentiate it from other cities (Garnham, 1985). The unique character and identity can be seen from the geographical location, language, culture, and tradition. These particular local attributes will produce a sense of belonging to encourage people to maintain their traditions and sense of place and an emotional connection between people and their lives (Herliana et al., 2017).

Tradition means a belief and a habit within a group of people passed down to some generations. Tradition generally refers to some accumulation of past practices or beliefs passed on by parents or authorities, which are re-run or rethought by agents through at least three consecutive "generations" (Jacobs, 2007). Culture represents shared values and traditions, and the meaning of traditions is defined by the people who share the values. There is a possible change in a

tradition. In relation to a festival or an exhibition, a process to create and accept new value is not solely constructed by the authorities, and rather it is an ongoing process modified by users and visitors (Lukito, 2016).

Petang Megang is one of the original traditions of Riau province, especially performed by people living in Pekanbaru and the surrounding areas. This tradition is a symbolization of a clean ceremony or bathing to welcome the holy month of Ramadan. The word *petang* means afternoon, and *megang* means the time between afternoon and dusk. There are differences regarding the emergence of the tradition of Petang Megang. First, Petang Megang is originally came from the Pelalawan region in Riau (Efni, 2017). Second, *mandi balimau*, as part of the tradition of Petang Megang, is believed to be originated from Batu Belah, Kampar Regency during the 1960s, and even the original tradition may come from West Sumatra (Pebrianto et al., 2019).

The essence of this Petang Megang tradition is *mandi balimau*. The word *mandi* means taking a bath or cleaning oneself, while the word *balimau* means lime water (Efni, 2017). The idea of *mandi balimau* is to cleanse the human body and purify the heart to welcome the holy month of Ramadan (Moekahar, 2018). Like most traditions, there are also some changes in Petang Megang, such as how the way it is performed and the values.

3. METHODS

Since this paper aims to discuss how the tradition of Petang Megang affects the space on the Siak riverside, it is necessary to understand how people use the riverside areas during the ceremony. The paper uses historical and qualitative approaches to investigate how people's activity affects space by the river and causes changes in the area. The historical approach aims to understand the city's development and the connection among people, their activities, and the river. Data collected through literature studies and observation of how people use the riverside are significant in analyzing infrastructure development.

This study results from direct observation of the Petang Megang festival between 2019-2020 and combines the information with secondary sources. The duration of each visit varies from two days to one week. The observations of activities near the Siak River are conducted to understand changes on the Siak riverside and how people are connected to the river in their daily activities, including during Petang Megang. In some observations, the study includes an interview of people living near the river and visitors who see the festival. The discussion on how the Siak River becomes the center of activities from the past to explore how people use the space on the riverside during the Petang Megang. The infrastructure analysis is present by mapping changes near the river from colonial to present by comparing maps, images, and interviews. This analysis helps understand physical changes near the river and interpreting the meaning of the river for people and the city of Pekanbaru. It also means understanding how infrastructures may accommodate Petang Megang tradition despite the rapid development of the riverside.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. A Development of Siak Riverside Area

Long before the name "Pekanbaru" was used as Riau Province's capital, Senapelan was first used as the name of the area on the Siak River banks that we now know as the city of Pekanbaru (Wulandari et al., 2017). The name Pekanbaru in Malay means new market, the word *pekan* means market, and the word *baru* means new. Historically, there are four critical moments in developing the Pekanbaru city structure (A. Ekomadyo, 2013). First, Pekanbaru becomes the capital of the Siak Kingdom in the eighteenth century. The area was also known as

a market for the Minangkabau merchants that had a crowded residential area. Second, the development of Pekanbaru during the Dutch colonial era, especially between 1920-1930. During this period, the city became a center of the coffee and coal industries. Third, Pekanbaru became the new Riau Province's capital in 1959 and became one of Sumatra's fast-growing cities. Fourth, during the decentralization era and the Sijori Growth Triangle (Singapore-Johor-Riau) declaration in 1990 that has enhanced the meaning of the city in economic and trading activities.

During the first development, Pekanbaru was designated as the Siak Kingdom's capital in 1762, led by Sultan Alamuddin Syah after the Portuguese took over Malacca in the sixteenth century (A. S. Ekomadyo et al., 2018). Raja Muda Muhammad Ali continued developing the Senapelan area and created a market on the Siak riverside. The market expected by Raja Ali eventually became more developed and crowded. The traders no longer passed the Petapahan route but passed through Senapelan (Wulandari et al., 2017). If the economic growth has developed, then developments in other fields also grow along with the progress and economic growth.

The second development era was during 1920-1930 when the Dutch East Indies government regulated Pekanbaru. During that time, Pekanbaru grew bigger, especially in fulfilling the increasing world demand for rubber supplies. Sumatra became one of the important rubber plantations, and Pekanbaru was an important transit city for rubber trading. Furthermore, the oil began to be explored in Pekanbaru, such as in 1924 by Standard Oil Company of California. In 1930, Stanvac Oil Company and Nederlandsche Koloniale Petroleum Maatschappij (NKPM) also formally explored oil in Pekanbaru and put the city as an important economic source. During these decades, urban infrastructure in Pekanbaru started to develop rapidly to support plantations and the oil industry. The authorities built some new ports along with the Siak River and the Simpang Tiga Airport in Pekanbaru.

The third development era was when Pekanbaru became the Riau Province's capital in 1959 (A. S. Ekomadyo et al., 2018). At first, its capital was Tanjung Pinang in Riau Islands, and then it was moved to Pekanbaru. As the capital city, the government of Pekanbaru began to build many facilities and infrastructure and established Pekanbaru as the center of the Riau government.

Figure 3. The growth of the Siak Riverside

Source: Adapted from (Depdikbud, 1977; Perpustakaan Nasional, 1933)

The fourth development was when there was a decentralization policy in 1999 (A. S. Ekomadyo et al., 2018). Local incomes were increased since 2000. With the development in economic activities, the role of Pekanbaru as a transit city was also significantly increased. The development of the Singapore-Johor-Riau growth triangle improved the economic activities and

profits of Pekanbaru as a transit city. There were rapid development in the city center and the surrounding areas dominated by commercial facilities and new settlements.

Since the Siak Kingdom period, the Siak Riverside area experiencing rapid growth with some roads, ports, markets, and settlements are built to help people in Pekanbaru to do their activities, especially on Siak riverside as the center of the city. Previously, the Siak River area was the center of the city and the economic activities such as Kampung Bandar, Kampung Dalam, and old market. Due to fast social and economic development, the city expands towards the North and south. Some new infrastructures and settlements are built with the river as the main orientation. Depicted in Figure 3 is a development of the Siak riverside as the center of people's activity in Pekanbaru. During the Siak Indrapoera Kingdom era, important places such as a palace, markets, and the Senapelan Village were built near the river. During the Dutch East Indies era, the Dutch built infrastructure such as roads, ports, schools, and housing to accommodate the city's growth. As a result, the areas near the river became crowded areas. The center of activities also developed according to new roads, government centers, and markets. There were some new business centers, and local people are needed to adapt to the changes. The orientation of buildings changed according to the existing roads and business centers. Places, whether markets, government centers, or neighborhoods, change the city's shape and how people live in a way these buildings attract new activities.

4.2. Petang Megang Tradition and Its Influence on the City Infrastructure

Petang Megang has some sacral and traditional values, such as cleansing both body and soul, reflecting the importance of cleanliness and spiritual purity (Moekahar, 2018). In addition, the ceremony has some processions:

1. People gather near the river and eat together or called *makan bajamba*. Community and religious leaders, government officials, respected people, and the general public come to the riverside and greet each other. The ritual starts before the midday prayer.
2. After the midday prayer, *mandi balimau* is conducted with some community leaders, royal families, and government officials lead the procession. The general public then follows the process, and they head to the river to cleanse themselves both physically and spiritually. Not only locals but tourists are welcome to join in this *mandi balimau* tradition. Aside from washing one's physical body, *mandi balimau* is also intended to cleanse all negative thoughts in the mind and hearts.
3. During the ceremony, people will shake hands as an expression of forgiveness for each other, taken from Islamic tradition in the area.

Figure 4. The location of Petang Megang held (Source: National Library)

During Petang Megang, the river becomes the center of the activity (Figure 4). People use the riverside to prepare for the ceremony and gather with families and friends. It is then necessary to have clear areas near the river so that the Petang Megang activities do not use settlement areas. Petang Megang, at first, only focuses on the activities of *mandi balimau* and gathering. Some people use boats or canoe to bring them to the river.

But in recent times, the gathering among community members, especially when the government and the religious leaders are present, is held under a tent on the riverside. The whole procession attracts tourists to Pekanbaru. According to Republika, in 2015, approximately 5000 people attended the Petang Megang ceremony.

Figure 5. The process of Petang Megang now (Source: authors' illustration)

Now, Pekanbaru Cultural and Tourism Office is the organizer of the Petang Megang tradition. Even though people still perform *mandi balimau*, there are some changes in the event. As depicted in Figure 5, Petang Megang now includes visiting graves and holy sites, or called *ziarah*, as a symbol of a connection to the ancestor. One of the important graves is the Siak Kingdom sultan's grave, located not far from the Siak River. Visiting the sacred graves is conducted between Zuhur and Ashar prayer times. People then perform Ashar pray in the Pekanbaru Grand mosque, located 850 meters from the Petang Megang location. After that, there is a parade towards the Siak Bridge, and when people reach the riverside, they perform the ritual bath together. To enliven Petang Megang, the organizer usually presents a series of entertainment, including a duck-catching race on the Siak River. With Petang Megang, the Siak riverside arguably becomes the most important tourist destination in Pekanbaru. Fun attractions and competitions such as the sampan festival and music concerts add up the Petang Megang ceremony.

The Siak River has the potential for the development of tourism areas on the riverside. To support Petang Megang as both a traditional ceremony and tourist attraction, the local government constructs several river basin infrastructures. The government limits and organizes access to the river by creating barriers and fences between the river and the settlements (see Figure 6). The development of the riverside as a tourism area is meant to revitalize the river's function and develop tourist attractions. The government builds the bridge over the Siak, some new access to the river, pedestrian paths, the tourist market, and a remnant of the Kingdom of Siak as part of the revitalization of the riverside areas. The Waterfront Park is located in the waterside area of Siak River that also interconnects with the historical traces of the Siak Kingdom. Just below the Siak III Bridge, there is a green open area for the local community or known as the city park. This park is quite spacious and has public facilities so that people can

enjoy the good scenery of the Siak River (see Figure 6). In short, the riverside now provides cultural attractions, culinary and recreation centers, and transportation for the city of Pekanbaru.

Figure 6. Some infrastructure built by the government (Source: google maps)

Table 1 shows the development of the Siak Riverside area and the connection with Pegang Megang from the Siak Kingdom to the Reformation Era. It seems that some development of urban infrastructure and settlements occur in this area. During the era of the Siak Kingdom, local people performed Petang Megang more as individual and small group activities and freely used the river. With the development of riverside for new settlements, and commercial areas during the Dutch Colonial era, some large ships began to pass through the region. The increasing activities near the river and the fast development in the area caused water and air pollutions. Although local people still performed Petang Megang as individual and small group activities, some people lost their interest in *mandi balimau*. After the reformation era in 1999, Pekanbaru began proclaiming the concept of Waterfront City for the city development and added the tradition of Petang Megang as the annual cultural event for tourists. Local government started to build parks, organizing access to the river, historical sites and tourist centers.

Table 1. Comparison of the tradition of Petang Megang and the use of Siak riverside from the Siak Kingdom to recent times.

CONDITION OF THE SIAK RIVERSIDE	Petang Megang Tradition
<p>The Siak Kingdom Era</p>	<p>Petang Megang started to exist with <i>mandi balimau</i> as the main activity. Some local people living near the river went to the River. The infrastructure of the riverside consisted of mostly natura elements.</p>
	<p>Local people continued to carry out Petang Megang as usual and sometimes by taking their boats to do <i>mandi balimau</i>. The Dutch and local government developed the riverside and some commercial buildings were built along the riverside. Port activities</p>

<p>The Dutch East Indies Era</p>	<p>were intensified with large ships came through the Siak River.</p>
<p>Post Independence Era (Circa 1970)</p>	<p>Local people still used the river for Petang Megang but due to crowded settlement, traffics, water and air pollution in this area not so many people join the ceremony. There were some new settlements and commercial centers built near the river.</p>
<p>After Reformation Era in 1999</p>	<p>Pekanbaru began applying the concept of Waterfront City as the development theme and included Petang Megang as the annual event. New infrastructures were built, mostly in relation to tourism. With the development of the riverside, access to river was limited.</p>

On the one side the development of the infrastructure is successful in inviting tourists during Petang Megang. On the other side this infrastructure local people experience some downfall in accessing the river. For instance, the parks built near the river cause difficulties for people to access the river. Local residents living near river choose to use the river outside the park and away from their settlement areas.

5. CONCLUSION

Siak River is the most important element of Pekanbaru, and it plays a vital role in the history and transformation of Pekanbaru. The Siak River has a rapid development and makes the Siak River the center of Pekanbaru. It is used as a transportation and transit area that results in development and the riverside areas. The community's attachment with the river indicates the people of Pekanbaru carry out a special relationship between Pekanbaru people and the Siak River with many activities and traditions.

Petang Megang is one of the original traditions from Riau. In this tradition, a purifying tradition is held near the river. During its practice to welcome the holy month of Ramadan, there are some processions of Petang Megang that connect people with the river. This paper has discussed how the tradition of Petang Megang affects the spatial form in the riverside area, especially to accommodate people's activities during Petang Megang. In its development, the practice of Petang Megang has undergone several changes. At first, this tradition focuses mainly on the river with *mandi balimau* and the gatherings. Nowadays, Petang Megang is more like a festival for local people with new attractions such as the sampan and music festivals that attract tourists. The way the community changes the practice of Petang Megang also affects the waterside area in a way people need clear access and place on the riverside areas.

The findings suggest that Petang Megang includes some changes in its procession and influences how people treat the river. To accommodate Petang Megang, the government changed the Siak riverside and added new infrastructures such as new parks, roads, and markets. Petang Megang shows a strong community attachment to the river, and people maintain the ceremony as part of their tradition. The infrastructure developments may accommodate the current needs of space. Still, there should be good planning for the riverside

to accommodate the audience, the tradition, and a potential change in its processions and the riverside use.

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