



MENTAWAI TRIBE

A LITTLE STORY OF OUR TRIBE



**MEET TOEKAPIK
AND SESAKAI:**
One of a “*Sikerei*” or
shaman in the tribe
and his wife.

We live in the deep rain forest of Siberut Island near Sumatra. Our tribe was considered as one of the oldest tribes ever existed in Indonesia. We survived in sustaining our indigenous lifestyle by continuously maintaining practices Arat Sabulungan belief. We live in our long hut like houses called "*uma*" and we practice tattoo making, teeth sharpening, sago making, fishing, hunting, and other spiritual traditions. We are close with our families, friends, and we love to work and make things, it is just part of our lifestyle.



A photograph of a traditional wooden building with a thatched roof. The roof is made of dried palm fronds or similar natural materials, hanging down in long, thin strands. The walls are made of horizontal wooden planks. A doorway is visible on the right side of the frame, leading into a dark interior. The text "WITHOUT 'UMA' OUR TRADITIONS WILL EXTINCT" is overlaid on the left side of the image.

WITHOUT "UMA" OUR
TRADITIONS WILL
EXTINCT

TITI

process



Image Source: Museum Adityawarman, Padang



Our bodies were beautifully inked as it is to proudly identify ourselves in the forest and marking the boundary of the tribal religion as well as to distinguish our tribe regionally. Our ***"Titi"*** or tattoo has unique motifs and values and was designed uniquely by our ancestors forming simple lines and shapes that resembles nature's objects and our achievements.

DURUKAT

motif



One of the main signature Mentawai tattoo pattern. The motif resembles an eagle and it depicts nature, bravery, empowerment, and masculinity.

SERPAK ABAK

motif



*Symbolizes balance of nature. Resembles an arrow.
Curving from left to right shoulder, from the neck to hips.*

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DAPDAP

motif



Symbolizes responsibility of Mentawai women on the journey of life and survival.

TEYTEY

motif



Resembles a fishing net; Mentawai women's main activity. Symbolizes maturity and achievement.

Image Source: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/281615782926475775/>

GAIGAI

motif



Men and women tattoo pattern. A hook like lines resembles details of uma architecture.

Image Source: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/212795151120494641/>



WE PROCESS OUR
OWN FABRIC. IT'S
CALLED "KABIT" OUR
TRADITIONAL FABRIC.



A close-up photograph of numerous long, green, lanceolate leaves, likely from a tropical plant, overlapping and crisscrossing the frame. The leaves have prominent parallel veins and some show signs of wear or damage, such as small brown spots and reddish-brown streaks. The lighting is natural, highlighting the texture and vibrant green color of the foliage.

**PROTECT OUR
RAINFOREST**

**OUR CULTURE
DEPENDS ON IT**



MATSURA BAGATA

THANK YOU