

**Java Sugar Mill Blog Part 13
(Unlucky for Olean!)
9 August 2017**

Olean, Prajakan and on to Jember



It was a quiet day at Olean. Some opted to go into the mill again. Those who stayed outside found one train of empties already gone and waited until 9:30 for the repair of No. 2 to be completed so we eventually got a train of empties. In the meantime, this was the view down the road outside the mill with the mill wall on the left. The flags are out ready for Independence Day 17 August.



The local stream had a population of freshwater crabs.



Eventually smokey No. 2 made it out to the west with empties.



The smoke persisted for the whole run. Smokey diesels to me suggest something is wrong.



We chased it to our coffee shop at Duwet before we let it go and headed back to the mill to collect those who had been inside.



In the afternoon, we found the latest field being worked north of Duwet. A combination of water buffalo (next shot) and tractor worked the loaded wagons to the diesel parked up on the edge of the village. We knew the diesel had a problem at this point but not how serious it was.



A simple ladder made from a large bamboo split down the middle with bamboo rungs added was being used to load the cane on the permanent track.



Pairs of water buffalo were hauling up to 5 lori out of the fields. At this point we went to our Warung Kopi (coffee shop) at the other end of the village to await a diesel hauled train of cane back to the mill. We waited a while - until dusk in fact.



The train headed by No. 2 eventually arrived with the tractor doing all the work.



The tractor could not cross the railway bridge due to the gauge of its wheels so it pushed the loco forward and ran round to the other side on a road bridge. No. 2 needed to be pushed back and coupled up to the train prior to a cable being attached so the tractor could pull the train across the railway bridge. The 'turis' lent a helping hand (from left, Ross, me, Chris and Graham).



The tractor pulled the train over the road but stalled. It was a long train of 20+ wagons so they had to split the train and the tractor brought it across the road in sections. We left them to it at this point. There was no sign of the other 2 diesels - new No. 1 had been under repair in the morning, old KK No. 1 is still not fully fixed and No. 2 had been smoking as good as a steam loco prior to its failure. It appears that Olean has a diesel loco problem at the moment. It needs at least 2 and currently has none it can rely on. If the tractor could cross all the rail bridges, I bet they would be looking to tractors as the solution! I wonder if another mill in the operating group has a spare small diesel or two in decent condition to lend to Olean? Wringinanom and Asembagus seem to have only just enough for their own needs. Of course, Olean could return to using their steam locos on a regular basis!

Situbondo to Jember

After 6 nights at the Hotel Rosali, today was the day to transfer to the Bintang Mulia in Jember. While 6 of the group visited Panji Mill, I went to the market. At 8 am only the fruit, meat and fish sections were open which was a bit of a surprise.



Hijab fashion is all the rage.



The main street of Situbondo looking west with Mt Ringgit just visible in the background.



Situbondo is a town of canals - not used for navigation but for irrigation.



In the centre of town is this relief depicting the Dutch trying to re-establish

their authority after World War II. The Dutch are on the right with their landing craft and tanks and the local freedom fighters are on the left. This was a very unsuccessful attempt to return to the pre-war status quo and led to independence being declared in 1947 and realised in 1948.



Cigarette ads are still permitted but need to include a health warning. This one has a smoker bottom left with two ghoulish skulls cheering him on.



Another peaceful canal shot, this one with a new mosque on the left. Most new mosques stick out like a sore thumb as they look like something from the Arabian/Persian Gulf (and that is probably where the funding came from).

After check out, we had lunch at the RM Malang.



Beer is still available.

We headed off to see the molasses train at Prajakan and caught it halfway along the main road between the mill and the storage tanks.



Here the train is propelling its 3 loaded tanks to the storage tanks.



This is the unloading facility. The molasses are dumped out the bottom of the tankers and pumped into the tank (visible on the right).



A Toyota bonnet bus (possibly with a locally-made body) was on school bus duties.



The molasses train heads back to the mill.



At the mill, this is where the tank wagons are loaded.



Panorama of the mill yard full of empty lori seen from what some thought of as a scary bridge.



Prajakan had 3 beefy tender locos to haul trains up and down the hills to the mill. These plus one tank loco still survive in the loco shed.



The bridge is not really scary.

We are now in Jember and the next blog will be about Semboro Mill.

**John Raby,
Jember,
9 August 2017**