

Cultural Heritage Site of *Mejan Ompung Mardugu Banjarnahor (Toga Sehun)*, Buluampa, Marpadan Village, Tarabintang, Humbang Hasundutan, North Sumatra

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ABSTRACT

Mejan Ompung Mardugu Banjarnahor (Toga Sehun) is a Cultural Heritage Site comprising a *mejan* and several *guri-guri* associated with secondary burial practices, and it possesses historical and cultural significance. This study examines the cultural significance of the site by investigating the meanings reflected in the *mejan*, the arrangement of the *guri-guri*, and their relationship with secondary burial traditions. Employing a qualitative approach, the research documented existing objects, conducted conservation by removing moss, and analyzed their aesthetic value, spatial arrangement, and cultural meanings. The findings reveal that the *guri-guri* functioned as containers for cremated remains within a secondary burial tradition and indicate Indian cultural influence. The *mejan*, depicting a human figure riding an elephant and oriented eastward, symbolically corresponds to Indra, the deity associated with the eastern direction. *Pupuk* was placed in a hole in the *mejan* as part of the cultural practice of ritually animating it. These findings demonstrate that Mejan Ompung Mardugu Banjarnahor is not merely a preserved archaeological object but material evidence of the interaction between burial traditions, symbolic beliefs, artistic expression, and external cultural influences in the historical development of the local community.

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INTRODUCTION

Mejan Ompung Mardugu Banjarnahor (Toga Sehun) is located in Marpadan Village, Tara Bintang District, Humbang Hasundutan Regency. The *Mejan* is a stone sculpture depicting a human figure riding an elephant, though only the lower body survives, as the head is missing. Local cultural traditions associate the *mejan* with death and secondary burial practices, as indicated by ten *guri-guri* positioned in front of the monument and identified as containers for cremated human remains (Nasoichah et al., 2023). In this tradition, the community cremated the deceased, placed the ashes in *guri-guri*, and represented the deceased through a gender- and social-identity-associated sculptural form. Previous research has documented *guri-guri* as part of secondary burial practices, providing an important archaeological basis for understanding the relationship between the *Mejan* and mortuary traditions in this region (Nasoichah et al., 2023).

The surviving sculpture depicts an elephant with two tusks and a hole in its trunk for placing *pupuk*, a substance traditionally understood as an antidote or protective medium against evil spirits and harmful influences. The depiction of the genitalia identifies the elephant as male, while its orientation indicates that it faces east. The *pupuk* is visible in the trunk near the mouth of an animal figure lying on its back, whose tail extends between the elephant's legs (Sihombing & Tampubolon, 2022). These documented physical features provide an important foundation for interpreting the symbolic dimensions of the *mejan*, particularly its relationship with mortuary beliefs and possible Hindu-Buddhist cultural influence. The combination of the elephant figure, eastward orientation, *pupuk*, and secondary burial context, therefore, requires analysis beyond a purely descriptive account of the archaeological remains.

The *Mejan* belongs to the Banjarnahor lineage, which Batak genealogy traces to Raja Naipospos through Marbun, alongside related lineages including Sibagariang, Hutaaruk, Simanungkalit, Situmeang, Marbun Lumbanbatu, and Marbun Lumbangaol (Brutu et al., 2023). Following Raja Naipospos's death and subsequent familial discord, Marbun left Dolok Imun with his mother, Boru Pasaribu, and his sister, carrying an heirloom gong (*ogung*) known as a *jeret*. During his migration, Marbun married into the Silaban clan in Rura Pansur Natolu before establishing a settlement in Parmonangan, an area now included within Baktiraja Subdistrict, Humbang Hasundutan Regency. Marbun later married Boru Pasaribu and had three sons—Lumban Batu, Banjarnahor, and Lumban Gaol—with Banjarnahor identified as his

second son. The name Banjarnahor combines *banjar*, referring to a traditional Batak settlement, and *nahor*, meaning “flat,” which may correspond to the physical character of the area where the *mejan* was discovered.

The human figure mounted on an elephant, oriented toward the east, is a particularly significant feature of the *Mejan Ompung Mardugu Banjarnahor*. In Hindu-Buddhist symbolism, the elephant is associated with Indra and the eastern direction, suggesting that the sculpture may preserve traces of broader cultural interaction within local Batak traditions. Although previous studies have documented the physical characteristics of the *mejan* and *guri-guri* and discussed secondary burial practices (Nasoichah et al., 2023; Sihombing & Tampubolon, 2022), the relationship among the monument’s eastward orientation, elephant symbolism, *pupuk*, secondary burial practices, and the cultural context of the Banjarnahor lineage has not been sufficiently integrated into a single interpretation. This gap limits understanding of the *Mejan* as material evidence of interaction between local mortuary traditions and external cultural influences. The present study addresses this gap by interpreting these archaeological, symbolic, and genealogical elements together rather than treating the *Mejan* solely as an isolated cultural heritage object.

This study, therefore, aims to examine the historical and cultural significance of *Mejan Ompung Mardugu Banjarnahor* by analyzing its relationship with secondary burial traditions; the arrangement and function of the *guri-guri*; the symbolism of the elephant and its eastward orientation; and indications of Hindu-Buddhist cultural influence. The study also situates these material remains within the historical context of the Banjarnahor lineage to clarify their significance within the local cultural landscape. The surviving remains require protection against environmental and physical deterioration, and current conservation measures include installing a perimeter fence and encouraging the heirs to conduct regular maintenance. By combining cultural interpretation with documentation and preservation, this study positions the site as material evidence for understanding historical beliefs, mortuary practices, artistic expression, and cultural interaction in North Sumatra. This approach also provides a stronger basis for recognizing the site’s historical and cultural value while supporting its long-term preservation.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to examine the *Mejan Ompung Mardugu Banjarnahor (Toga Sehun)* Cultural Heritage Site in Buluampa, Marpadan Village, Tarabintang Subdistrict, Humbang Hasundutan Regency, North Sumatra. The researchers selected this approach to develop an in-depth understanding of the site’s existence, physical characteristics, historical background, cultural value, and social significance within the local community. This approach enabled the researchers to examine the site not merely as a material relic but as cultural heritage connected to community identity, collective memory, kinship systems, and local history (Kusumastuti & Khoiron, 2021). The research design focused on interpreting the historical and cultural significance of the *mejan* through its material characteristics, local traditions, and meanings attributed to it by the community.

The researchers collected data through field observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. They selected informants purposively from traditional leaders, descendants or members of the Banjarnahor clan, residents, and other individuals with knowledge of the history and cultural significance of *Mejan Ompung Mardugu Banjarnahor (Toga Sehun)*. Field observations examined the physical condition, form, materials, ornamentation, surrounding environment, and state of preservation of the *mejan*. At the same time, interviews explored its historical background, cultural meanings, social functions, and community perceptions. The researchers complemented these data with photographs, field notes, documents, archives, relevant literature, and other written sources. They applied source and method triangulation by comparing information among informants and cross-checking interview accounts with field observations and documentary evidence.

The researchers analyzed observational, interview, and documentary data through data reduction, data presentation, interpretation, and conclusion drawing. They integrated these three forms of evidence by selecting, comparing, and grouping data by themes related to the research objective, including the site’s history, the physical characteristics of the *mejan*, cultural value, social function, state of preservation, and community perceptions. The researchers compared observational evidence with informant accounts and documentary sources to identify similarities, differences, and contextual relationships before interpreting the findings within the local community’s historical and cultural setting. They strengthened data validity by cross-checking statements among informants and examining their consistency with field observations and documentary evidence. This integrated analytical process connected material evidence, community knowledge, and documentary information to explain the historical and

cultural significance of *Mejan Ompung Mardugu Banjarnahor (Toga Sehun)* and its relevance to the preservation of local cultural heritage in Humbang Hasundutan Regency.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Physical and Genealogical Context of *Mejan Ompung Mardugu Banjarnahor*

Direct field observation showed that *Mejan Ompung Mardugu Banjarnahor* stands on land associated with the Marbun clan and remains generally intact, except for the missing table lid. Field observations also found no physical indication of previous restoration at the site. The elephant sculpture measures 110 cm in length, 53 cm in height at the front, and 33 cm at the back. Several rounded white stone or limestone (sandstone) containers with central cavities stand in front of the elephant, while some are more rectangular. Local terminology identifies these ten containers as *guri-guri*, linking their physical presence to the site's cultural interpretation.

Field measurements documented variations in the dimensions of the ten *guri-guri*: (1) top diameter = 43 cm, hole diameter = 20 cm; (2) top diameter = 30 cm, hole diameter = 15 cm; (3) top diameter = 25 cm, hole diameter = 14 cm; (4) top diameter = 25 cm, hole diameter = 16 cm; and (5) top diameter = 21 cm, hole diameter = 14 cm. The remaining containers measure: (6) top diameter = 25 cm, hole diameter = 25 cm; (7) top diameter = 27 cm, hole diameter = 10 cm; (8) top diameter = 25 cm, hole diameter = 15 cm; (9) top diameter = 25 cm, hole diameter = 19 cm; and (10) top diameter = 24 cm, hole diameter = 16 cm. These measurements demonstrate that the *guri-guri* vary in both overall size and cavity diameter rather than following a uniform physical form. Their shared placement within the same site, despite dimensional variation, indicates that physical uniformity was not the defining characteristic of these objects. The measurements, therefore, provide material evidence for examining the *guri-guri* as a group of functionally related objects and contribute to understanding the site's organization and cultural significance.



Figure 1. *Mejan Ompung Mardugu Banjarnahor (Toga Sehun)*
(Source: Department of Tourism, Culture, and Creative Economy, 2023)

Previous literature provides the genealogical context necessary to situate the site within the history of the Marbun lineage. Batak genealogy identifies the Marbun clan as descendants of Raja Naipospos alongside the Sibagariang, Hutaauruk, Simanungkalit, and Situmeang clans, while Marbun represents the ancestral figure of the subsequent Marbun lineage (Silaban et al., 2024). Genealogical accounts identify Donda Hopol (Sibagariang) as the firstborn from Raja Naipospos's first wife, followed by Marbun from his second wife, and Donda Ujung (Hutaauruk), Ujung Tinumpak (Simanungkalit), and Jamita Mangaraja (Situmeang) from the first wife. The *tarombo* tradition generally lists descendants of the first wife before those of the second wife when an ancestor had descendants from multiple wives. This genealogical convention consequently places Marbun as the youngest within the Naipospos genealogy despite his reported birth order (Samosir et al., 2022).

Oral tradition among Naipospos descendants identifies Dolok Imun–Huta Raja as the first settlement established by Raja Naipospos and the place where his children, including Marbun, were believed to have been born and raised. Dolok Imun is now administratively part of the Sipoholon area, Pagaran District, North Tapanuli Regency. Traditional

accounts relate that Marbun left Dolok Imun with his mother, Boru Pasaribu, and a sister, following a conflict between the descendants of Raja Naipospos's two wives, while carrying an inherited gong (*ogung*) known as *jeret*. During their journey, they temporarily stayed in Silaban Rura, Pansur Natolu, where Marbun's sister reportedly married a descendant of the Silaban clan. Previous literature further records that Marbun later established a settlement in Parmonangan, Bakara, which is now located within the Baktiraja District, Humbang Hasundutan Regency (Le Vot et al., [2024](#)).

Genealogical and historical sources record that Marbun and his wife, Boru Pasaribu, had three sons: Lumban Batu, Banjar Nahor, and Lumban Gaol. The actual personal names of these three sons remain uncertain because *lumban* and *banjar* historically referred to forms of traditional Batak settlements rather than necessarily functioning as personal names. Previous research indicates that the terms *huta*, *lumban*, *banjar*, and *sosor* designate settlement- or village-level units within the Batak social system (Sihombing & Tampubolon, [2022](#)). This linguistic and historical context is relevant to interpreting the Banjarnahor lineage because it links clan nomenclature to traditional patterns of settlement and social organization. The genealogical background, therefore, situates *Mejan Ompung Mardugu Banjarnahor* within a broader cultural landscape shaped by kinship, settlement, and inherited identity.

Genealogical tradition maintains that Marbun's descendants initially used Marbun as their common clan name, although the generation in which this practice changed remains uncertain. Following a marriage arrangement known as *tompas bongbong* among the three principal branches of Marbun's descendants, the names of Marbun's three sons became the clan names Lumbanbatu, Banjarnahor, and Lumbangaol (Team Tobatabo). Individuals bearing the Marbun surname can consequently identify their genealogical branch as Marbun Lumbanbatu, Marbun Banjarnahor, or Marbun Lumbangaol. Contemporary clan associations encourage members of the Lumbanbatu, Banjarnahor, and Lumbangaol branches to avoid intermarriage in order to maintain their recognized kinship ties (Shaleha et al., [2025](#)). The same kinship principle also applies among other lineages descended from Naipospos (Parsadaan Toga Marbun Indonesia).

Local tradition also uses the term *marpadan* to describe an ancestral pledge that establishes kinship and prohibits marriage between descendants of the parties bound by the agreement. Oral accounts from elders of the Marbun and Sihotang clans maintain that the two groups established a special *padan*, although the generation in which this agreement originated remains uncertain. Sihotang is identified in these genealogical traditions as the second son of Raja Oloan. At the same time, descendants of Marbun and Sihotang continue to recognize one another as *dongan padan* and observe the prohibition against intermarriage. Over time, this relationship extended to other Naipospos clans, which also came to regard the Sihotang as relatives (Aji, [1997](#); Tobing, [1956](#)). These kinship traditions provide a broader cultural context for interpreting the site, as they demonstrate how genealogy, inherited agreements, settlement histories, and collective memory continue to shape the social identity of the Banjarnahor lineage.

Hindu-Buddhist Influence and Its Localization in Pakpak Mortuary Traditions

The Pakpak *Kelasen* comprise Pakpak communities who traditionally inhabit and speak the *Kelasen* dialect, including the Tumanggor, Siketang, Tinambunan, Anak Ampun, Kesogihen, Maharaja, Meka, Berasa, and other groups. Their settlement areas extend across Parlilitan and Pakkat in Humbang Hasundutan Regency, as well as parts of the surrounding region, including the cultural landscape where *Mejan Ompung Mardugu Banjarnahor (Toga Sehun)* is located. Based on dialect and territorial distribution, the Pakpak are generally classified into five major groups: Pakpak Simsim, Pakpak Keppas, Pakpak Pegagan, Pakpak Boang, and Pakpak Kelasen. These divisions correspond to customary clan territories that historically extended beyond modern administrative boundaries into areas now included in Aceh Singkil, Humbang Hasundutan, and Central Tapanuli. This broader cultural geography provides an important context for interpreting the *Mejan* as part of a cultural tradition that developed within networks connecting different Pakpak territories.

Historical and archaeological evidence suggests that contact between local communities and Indian cultural networks created conditions for the incorporation of Hindu-Buddhist elements into Pakpak culture. Dairi occupied an important position within these networks because traders, including those from southern India, reached the region to obtain valuable forest commodities produced in the Bukit Barisan area. The Old Lobu Inscription, dated 1010 Saka (1088 AD), records the presence of the *Ayyavole* 500 trade guild, while Armenian sources from the thirteenth to eighteenth centuries identify Pant'chour as an important source of high-quality camphor (Kévonian, [2002](#); Wiradnyana, [2011](#)). Rajendra I is Tanjavur inscription also mentions "Pannai on the riverbank." At the same time, historical evidence identifies Dairi on the west coast and Pane toward the east as important points of interaction with Indian cultural networks. Valleys and rivers that cross the Bukit Barisan facilitated connections between inland communities and

coastal trading centers, allowing commodities, people, and cultural elements to circulate throughout the region (Soedewo, [2008](#)).

Trade routes connecting Singkel and Dairi with Pakpak territories and Sibolga, as well as Natal with Angkola and Mandailing, further demonstrate the importance of mountains, valleys, and rivers in regional interaction. Until the early nineteenth century, Pakpak, Angkola, and Mandailing communities collected forest products, particularly camphor and frankincense, and traded them through markets on the western and eastern coasts of Sumatra. Such sustained interaction provides a historical context for cultural acculturation rather than evidence of the wholesale adoption of Indian religious culture. Local communities could incorporate selected external symbols into pre-existing beliefs, ritual practices, and material traditions while assigning them meanings relevant to their own cultural environment. The Hindu-Buddhist elements identified at the *Mejdan* should therefore be understood as possible expressions of cultural adaptation and localization within Pakpak traditions rather than as direct reproductions of Indian religious practices.

The form of *Mejan Ompung Mardugu Banjarnahor (Toga Sehun)* provides material evidence relevant to this process of localization. The surviving sculpture represents a rider mounted on an elephant. However, the loss of the rider's head prevents identification of attributes such as a crown that might have strengthened a specific iconographic interpretation. Hindu iconography associates the elephant with Indra, the deity connected with the eastern cardinal direction, while the *mejan* itself also faces east (Poerbatjaraka, [1992](#); Subbarayalu, [2002](#)). This correspondence suggests a possible connection to Hindu-Buddhist symbolism. However, the surviving material evidence does not establish that the sculpture directly represents Indra or that its builders intended it as an image of that deity. The eastward orientation and elephant motif, therefore, provide comparative evidence for cultural influence while requiring interpretation within the local Pakpak mortuary and ancestral belief system.

Comparable cultural forms support an interpretation based on adaptation rather than direct imitation. The swan-shaped cover of the *pertulanen*, for example, has been interpreted as a local transformation of Hindu iconography combined with an existing stone form and the indigenous concept of a vehicle for the spirit (Poerbatjaraka, [1992](#); Subbarayalu, [2002](#)). Other traditional forms, including hornbill heads, horses, and boats, also serve as symbols of spirit vehicles, indicating that local communities already possessed their own visual vocabulary for representing relationships between the living and the dead. The adoption of names such as *Batara Guru (Shiva Mahaguru)* and *Boraspati (Wrhaspati)* similarly illustrates how external religious terminology could enter local traditions without completely replacing indigenous concepts of ancestral spirits. These examples suggest that Hindu-Buddhist elements were selectively reinterpreted through Pakpak concepts of ancestors, spirits, death, and the supernatural.

The ten *pertulanen*, locally known as *guri-guri*, positioned in front of *Mejan Ompung Mardugu Banjarnahor (Toga Sehun)*, further connect the monument with secondary burial practices. Most of these containers have lost their lids, although information from the heirs indicates that each originally had one. The terms *pertulanen* and *parabuen* refer to places associated with ashes and cremated remains, and the *parabuen* ceremony required ritual objects such as firewood, banana trunks (*sitabar*) shaped into human forms and covered with cloth (*persilihi*), white cloth for wrapping bones, containers, and sacrificial animals. Relatives identified as *kula-kula*, *berru*, and *sinina* participated in the ceremony, which typically took place in the morning and linked the rising sun to the spirit's journey and the well-being of surviving relatives. The spatial association between the *mejan* and the ten *guri-guri*, therefore, supports an interpretation of the site as a mortuary complex in which material objects, ancestral commemoration, and ritual practices operated as an interconnected system.

During the *menuntung tulan* ceremony, family members burned ancestral bones, then collected the ashes and remaining bone fragments, wrapped them in white cloth, and placed them in a *pertulanen* or *guri-guri*. However, some remains could also be taken to the *Sukut* house. Before Islam and Christianity became established in Pakpak territory, local belief recognized supernatural figures including *Batara Guru*, *Tunggul Ni Kuta*, and *Boraspati Ni Tanoh*, whose names appeared in ritual invocations associated with the burning of ancestral bones (Siahaan, [1977](#)). The terms *Boraspati* and *Batara Guru* show linguistic and conceptual relationships with the Sanskrit *Wrhaspati* and Hindu representations associated with Shiva or Agastya. Their presence in local ritual language indicates a process in which Hindu-derived terminology entered an existing system of ancestor veneration and supernatural belief rather than simply replacing it. This localized integration strengthens the interpretation of the site as evidence of cultural interaction expressed through Pakpak ritual concepts.

Pakpak mortuary traditions also emphasize continuing relationships between deceased ancestors and their descendants. The *menuntung tulan*, also known as *jasangken*, honors the deceased while symbolically relieving the spirit's burden (Pinayungan, 2000). Families could perform the ceremony after a dream (*nipi*) in which the deceased appeared burdened, confined, or uncomfortable, reflecting the belief that ancestral spirits could communicate with living descendants through dreams, illness, and other experiences. Consequently, ceremonies and sacrificial offerings maintained reciprocal relationships between the living community and ancestral spirits. Within this context, the *mejan* and *guri-guri* take on significance not merely as archaeological objects but as material components of a broader system of ancestral remembrance and mortuary ritual.

Indian mythology associates Indra with thunder, weather, rain, warfare, and the eastern direction, and identifies the white elephant *Airawata* as his vehicle (Zoetmulder, 1985). Hindu cosmology also places other directional deities around the cardinal and intermediate directions, collectively known as the *astadikpalaka*, although the site does not depict them. The combination of an elephant figure and the eastward orientation of *Mejan Ompung Mardugu Banjarnahor* makes a comparison with Indra iconography relevant, particularly because the east is also symbolically associated with sunrise and the beginning of life. The available evidence, however, does not demonstrate conclusively that the monument was specifically constructed for the worship of Indra; it supports only the possibility that Hindu-Buddhist directional and iconographic concepts influenced the local representation. This interpretation becomes more persuasive when considered alongside other localized Hindu-derived elements in Pakpak ritual terminology and mortuary practices rather than treating the elephant figure alone as definitive evidence.

Several holes in the elephant sculpture provide another link between the *mejan*'s physical characteristics and local ritual practice. Previous studies associate such cavities with *pupuk*, a ritual substance used by Batak ritual specialists (*datu*) and described in Batak magical traditions as a medium that can empower objects and establish relationships with supernatural forces (Berutu, 2007; Kozok, 2009; Sastri, 1932). Historical accounts describe the preparation of *pupuk* through practices involving human and animal materials and its storage in containers such as *guri-guri*. At the same time, other traditions used horn or ceramic containers (Matius et al., 1993). Rather than reproducing these procedural descriptions in detail, their analytical relevance lies in the belief that *pupuk* could ritually animate or empower ancestral figures, including statues identified as *debata idup* or *pangulubalang* (Sinuhaji & Hasanuddin, 1999). The holes observed on the *mejan* may therefore indicate a ritual function associated with the local concept of activating or empowering the sculpture. However, this interpretation should be approached with caution in the absence of direct evidence confirming the original contents of the cavities (Voorhoeve, 1972).

Taken together, the elephant figure, eastward orientation, *guri-guri*, secondary burial practices, Hindu-derived ritual terminology, and possible use of *pupuk* reveal a cultural configuration that cannot be explained solely through either indigenous Pakpak tradition or Hindu-Buddhist influence. The evidence instead points toward a process of localization in which communities incorporated selected external symbols and concepts into established practices concerning ancestors, spirits, death, and social memory. The elephant and its orientation may reflect knowledge of Hindu-Buddhist symbolism, while the *guri-guri*, ancestral rituals, and ritual empowerment of the *mejan* situate those elements firmly within local mortuary traditions. This interpretation explains why the site preserves recognizable traces of wider cultural interaction while maintaining forms and meanings rooted in the Pakpak/Batak cultural environment. *Mejan Ompung Mardugu Banjarnahor (Toga Sehun)*, therefore, provides material evidence for examining how external cultural elements were selectively adapted, reinterpreted, and integrated into local traditions over time.

CONCLUSION

The study demonstrates that *Mejan Ompung Mardugu Banjarnahor (Toga Sehun)* holds significant historical and cultural value through the interrelationships among the *mejan*, *guri-guri*, secondary burial traditions, local beliefs, and Hindu-Buddhist cultural elements. The ten *guri-guri* or *parabuen* associated with cremated remains provide material evidence of secondary burial practices. At the same time, the elephant figure, the eastward orientation, and the ritual use of *pupuk* reveal the monument's symbolic dimensions. The association between the elephant and Indra, the deity connected with the eastern direction in Hindu-Buddhist traditions, suggests possible external cultural influence; however, this interpretation should be understood as evidence of cultural adaptation rather than definitive proof that the *mejan* was created specifically for the worship of Indra. These elements indicate that Hindu-Buddhist symbols were selectively incorporated into local beliefs concerning ancestors, death, spirits, and the afterlife. The site, therefore,

represents material evidence of cultural interaction and localization within the historical development of Pakpak/Batak mortuary traditions.

The historical and cultural significance of *Mejan Ompung Mardugu Banjarnahor* requires sustained preservation efforts to minimize deterioration from human activities, animals, and environmental factors. Preservation efforts should prioritize the physical integrity of the *mejan* and *guri-guri* while maintaining their spatial arrangement and cultural context as an interconnected mortuary complex. The local community, descendants of the Banjarnahor lineage, cultural institutions, and relevant government authorities should participate in regular monitoring and maintenance of the site. Further research should also examine the chronology, iconography, secondary burial practices, and relationship between local beliefs and Hindu-Buddhist cultural elements to strengthen interpretations that remain dependent on comparative evidence. Such research would provide a stronger scholarly foundation for understanding the site and supporting its long-term preservation.

The relevant authorities should conduct a formal assessment of *Mejan Ompung Mardugu Banjarnahor (Toga Sehun)* for cultural heritage designation, based on applicable legal and regulatory criteria, rather than relying solely on its presumed age, uniqueness, and historical importance. The assessment should document its age, physical characteristics, rarity, historical significance, cultural values, and association with secondary burial traditions, so that its legal status can be determined through the appropriate heritage-designation process. Protective measures, including appropriate perimeter fencing, may be implemented to reduce potential damage, but their design and materials should adhere to conservation principles and avoid altering the site's integrity and visual character. Documentation, routine maintenance, community participation, and institutional supervision should accompany physical protection measures. These efforts can help preserve the site as a source of historical knowledge and cultural memory for future generations.

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