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May/June 2016

ABA INITIATIVES

Anambas cruise and the latest news from reciprocal marinas

SB20 ASIAN GRAND SLAM & ASIA PACIFIC CHAMPIONSHIPS 2016

Report and pictures inside!

MOTHER'S & FATHER'S DAY CELEBRATIONS

Quality menus to honour your parents

Voyage To Bali

With **My Singapore Friends**

26 December 2015 to 8 January 2016

An ordinary crew of strangers sailing onboard *Mir* becomes an extraordinary family of friends in the spirit of exploration.
By **Christopher Dolphin**

It was the day after Christmas, at the break of dawn, the crew of *Mir* awoke to a beautiful setting: A full moon and a very colourful sunrise, the perfect time to begin a ten-day voyage to Bali, Indonesia. As our crew of ten departed Singapore, there were two Singaporeans among us: Juan Qi An and Nadia Low. We had always hoped to find people from Singapore who would be interested to join *Mir* and get involved with our conservation programmes. Now we had five women and five men; five sailors and five beginners; the crew couldn't have had a better mix of individuals to be out at sea together.

The second day at sea was rough. We had strong winds and big swells, and *Mir* got knocked around a bit, showing those that had not been on the ocean before a bit of the power of the sea and the excitement of being on an expedition. A few people got seasick for a little while, but the weather quickly settled down, and the sails went up and the stars came out.

Soon it was time to cross the equator! Six of the crew had never done this before and it was time to initiate them so they would never forget it. Having been hazed myself I couldn't help but have a little fun. As we crossed the equator, I blindfolded everyone and put them all in a line on the stern. I then asked them one by one to volunteer, step forward, sit down in front of me and be asked questions about the sea. If answered correctly, they were rewarded; and if wrong penalised by having to drink from a random bottle placed in front of them (the contents of which included vinegar, fish sauce, rum, soy sauce, ginger beer, salt water, etc.). Lastly, those that had been initiated all took turns tossing buckets of seawater on their fellow deckhands just before they took off their blindfolds.

On our arrival to Menjangan Island, we were accompanied by a pod of dolphins, a shark that jumped out of the water, straight up into the air twice to get a better look of who we were, and five beautiful Brydes whales. The crew, although tired from a long journey, had become a real team, a family of sea people that survived the Java Sea together.

Mir is now moored in Banyuwedang Bay in Northwest Bali and will be there until July this year. During these months, we will be completing



our second study of the island's coral reef to learn about the changes in health since 2011. The first study showed us that we needed to get small boats to stop anchoring directly on the reef so we initiated a mooring buoy team. This year, with a Crown of Thorns outbreak (that our team is trying to eradicate), we need to know what are the other most pressing concerns for its future protection. We will also continue to build awareness with the local community about trash management, mangrove restoration and safe diving practices, as well as to help protect their land and sea. 🙏

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