



# LAKE TOBA WRITERS FESTIVAL



The spectacular Caldera of Lake Toba in North Sumatera, Indonesia has helped nurture the proud and enterprising Batak ethnic community with sub-ethnic groups of Toba, Karo, Pakpak, Simalungun, Angkola and Mandailing. Their rich culture evidenced in language, literature, architecture, art, sculpture, music, dance, cuisine, tribal customs and festivals has fascinated many over the centuries. Lake Toba has been included in UNESCO's List of Global Geoparks and it has been named a super priority tourism destination by Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, Government of Indonesia.

Lake Toba Writers Festival, a collaboration between lovers of Lake Toba, Batak Culture and Creative Writing, seeks to enhance this fascination and inspiration. The inaugural edition will take place on 26-27 September 2023 at Rogate Beach Hotel on Samosir island at the center of the lake. It will bring together writers, readers, teachers, creative artists and culture buffs from around the province, Indonesia and the world.

A special feature of Lake Toba Writers Festival will be an endeavor to help preserve the ancient Batak Language and Opera that are in urgent need of support for their revival and outreach to a wider audience.

The festival will also seek to promote Sustainable Tourism by encouraging responsible behaviors, giving opportunities to local businesses and vendors and undertaking CSR activities like book donations for local libraries, linguistic capacity building among school and university teachers and encouragement of local and youth writers.

With the support of well-wishers, it is hoped that Lake Toba Writers Festival will become an annual part of the Cultural and Literary Calendar of Indonesia and Southeast Asia. We invite you to attend this unique event and look forward to greeting you with the traditional Batak greeting of Horas!

# LAKE TOBA WRITERS FESTIVAL



## Lake Toba Writers Festival 2023

### Day 1, Tuesday 26 September 2023 Agenda

**08.30-09.00 : Registration**

**09.00-09.45 : Session 1 – Opening Ceremony, Speeches, Traditional Batak Welcome, Invocations**

**09.45-10.30 : Festival Homage to Sitor Situmorang and Nahum Situmorang**

**10.30-10.45 : Rest Break**

**10.45-12.15 : Session 2 – Lake Toba Inspirations in Literature (Budi Hutasuhut, Sepwan Sinaga)**

**12.15-13.30 : Lunch Break**

**13.30-15.00 : Session 3 – Literary Explorations of Nature vs Nurture (Thomson Hutasoit, Amol Titus)**

**15.00-15.15 : Rest Break**

**15.15-16.45 : Session 4 – Confluence of Ethnic, Regional, National and Global Identities (Martha Pardede, Jones Gultom)**

**16.45-17.00 : Closing Announcements**

***Note : Daily entrance ticket is IDR 120,000- (IDR 80,000- for school/ university students and teachers) including tax and bonus Lunch Box. Payable at site.***

# LAKE TOBA WRITERS FESTIVAL



## Lake Toba Writers Festival 2023

### Day 2, Wednesday 27 September 2023 Agenda

**08.30-09.00 : Registration**

**09.00-09.30 : Festival Homage to Rabindranath Tagore and Chairil Anwar**

**09.30-10.30 : Session 5 – Challenge for Poets and Poetry in a Post-Truth World (Amol Titus)**

**10.30-10.45 : Rest Break**

**10.45-12.15 : Session 6 – Linguistic Prowess and Expertise of Asian Writers (Robert Sibarani, Daphne Lee)**

**12.15-13.15 : Lunch Break**

**13.15-14.45 : Session 7 – Relevance & Revival of Batak Language and Literature (Saut Poltak Tambunan, Jekmen Sinulingga)**

**14.45-15.00 : Rest Break**

**15.00-16.30 : Session 8 – Special Batak Opera Performance (Performed by Thomson Hutasoit and Group)**

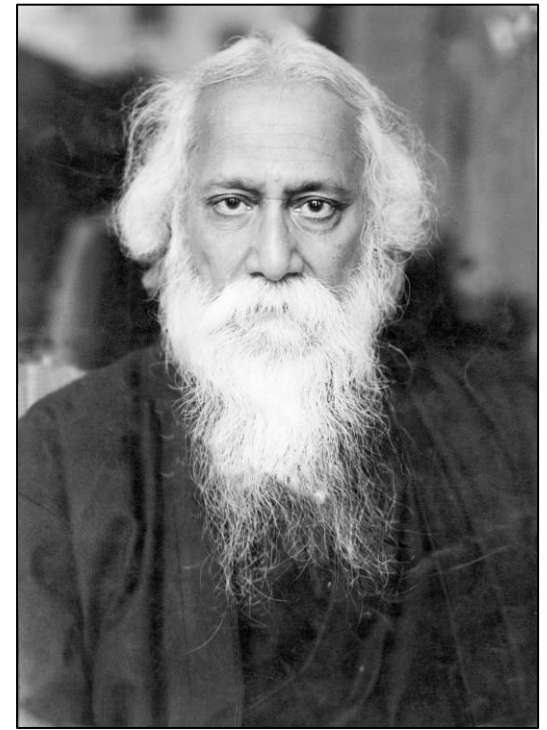
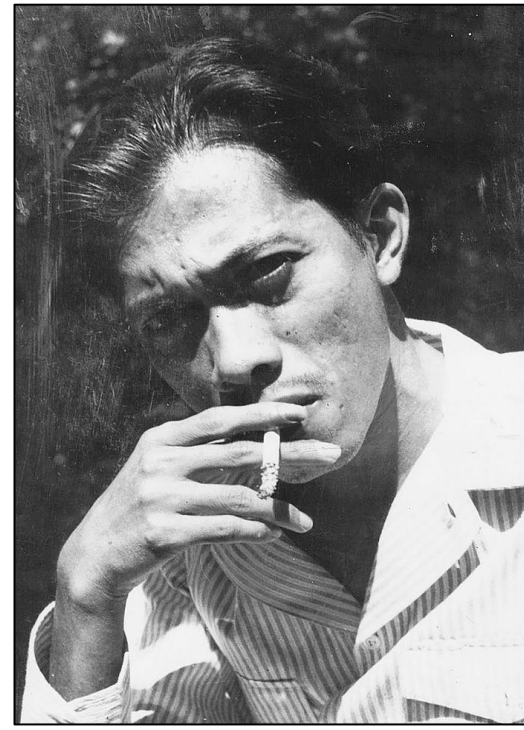
**16.30-17.00 : Closing Speeches, Acknowledgements and Commemorations**

***Note : Daily entrance ticket is IDR 120,000- (IDR 80,000- for school/ university students and teachers) including tax and bonus Lunch Box. Payable at site.***

# LAKE TOBA WRITERS FESTIVAL



At Lake Toba Writers Festival 2023 there will be a special Festival Homage paid to (featured below from left to right) Sitor Situmorang, Nahum Situmorang, Chairil Anwar and Rabindranath Tagore. Sitor Situmorang and Chairil Anwar are legendary Indonesian poets and writers while Nahum Situmorang gave voice and musicality to some of Batak culture's most famous songs and poetry. All 3 hail from North Sumatera. Rabindranath Tagore, legendary poet, writer, educator and Nobel Laureate from India, visited Indonesia in 1927. In September 2023, Tagore's home and university in Santiniketan, West Bengal, was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.



# LAKE TOBA WRITERS FESTIVAL



*“Lake Toba Writers Festival is a great addition to the comprehensive calendar of events aimed at promoting this unique destination that has been accorded the ‘super priority’ status. We look forward to welcoming writers, readers, culture lovers and media to Samosir. Horas!”*

- **Tetti Naibaho**, Head of Department of Culture and Tourism, Samosir



*“I am very excited about the Lake Toba Writers Festival and the opportunity to perform the rare art form of Opera Batak that combines Poetry, Music, Dance and traditional Cultural Elements. Horas!”*

- **Thomson Hutasoit**, Writer, Cultural Expert, Opera Director



*“Lake Toba Writers Festival answers the long pending aspiration among writers and creative artists to have a prestigious international festival of our own. We are making a beginning with sincere intention and are confident that in the years to come this festival will become a favorite among writers and experts from Indonesia and around the world. Horas!”*

- **Saut Poltak Tambunan**, Writer, Linguistic Expert, Educationist



*“Lake Toba Writers Festival will celebrate Languages (Batak, Bahasa Indonesia, English), Literatures (Ancient, Classical, Contemporary), Creative Forms (Prose, Poetry, Opera) and Diversity (Local, National, Global) in a truly evocative and inspirational setting. Horas!”*

- **Amol Titus**, Writer, Poet, Educationist, Senior Strategic Advisor

# LAKE TOBA WRITERS FESTIVAL



**Lake Toba Writers Festival celebrates Creativity with Conscience. Each year we will give back to the community that graciously hosted us through impactful CSR programs**

## **CSR Program 1 (Local Community Support)**

**Tuesday, 26 September 2023 (16.30-19.00)**

A Crafts and Local Products Bazaar will be organized to support Lake Toba communities, self employed, small and medium businesses and village cooperatives. Tea/coffee, snacks and food during the Festival is being sourced from suppliers in Desa Unjur and Desa Huta Tinggi . In this way we hope to help promote and popularize wonderful Ulos cloths, handicrafts, spices, coffee and organic items.

## **CSR Program 2 (Opera Batak Heritage Preservation Support)**

**Wednesday, 27 September 2023 (15.00-16.30)**

Opera Batak has a unique theatre style that combines ancient Batak cultural elements of language, mythology, story telling, poetry, music, traditional instruments and costumes. By incorporating a performance in the Festival that is expertly choreographed and which gives opportunities to young performers, we hope to support era Batak's critical revival.

## **CSR Program 3 (Books Donation and Library Support)**

**Presentation during Festival Closing Ceremony**

Unfortunately, in current times the habit of reading books, magazines, essays and poetry, is dying out. Books stalls are vanishing, and libraries look abandoned. Without proper reading habits and exposure to great literary and creative minds, the education of youth is incomplete. Writers assembling at the Festival will address this issue by donating sets of their books.

## **CSR Program 4 (Teacher Training Support)**

**Thursday, 28 September 2023 (10.00-12.00)**

According to Encyclopedia Britannica Batak Language belongs to the Austronesian family. In 2nd -3rd century it was influenced by Indian ideas of alphabet and writing. It was further developed by six cultural communities of the Toba, Karo, Simalungun, Pak Pak, Mandailing and Angkola. Batak language experts will train teachers to help ensure that this ancient language survives.

