

# THE LEGEND OF PRINCESS MANDALIKA

## Lets Come And Join A Nyale Festival

February 14-15, 2009

Every February the Sasak people of Lombok have a very interesting ceremony, held on the beautiful Indian Ocean south coast of the island.

Thousands of people go to the single beach near Kute (Kuta) where, for one day only, the Nyale sea worms appear. They seek to harvest the worms, which appear only between midnight and about 3.30pm on the one day in February.

Special traditional art performances take place, including Betandak, a recitation by two or more performers singing quatrains, and Bejambik, the giving of gifts to lovers.

The next day, people join in the ceremony of Belancaran, basically a recreational sea trip.

Bau Nyale celebrates the legend of a beautiful princess, Putri Mandalika, who many centuries ago lived in the royal house of the Tonjang Beru kingdom.



She was so beautiful that many princes from all over Lombok were interested in her.

On one particular day, and at the same time, six princes came to propose marriage.

This led to much confusion. Putri Mandalika's father, the king, did not know who to choose from among the six suitors, because whatever he did it would inevitably lead to jealousy and eventual warfare among the kingdoms.

Greatly perturbed, he decided to

leave the decision to Putri Mandalika, but she too was confused and uncertain what to do because whatever her decision, her choice of a prince to marry would create a situation in which her people would be drawn into conflict and personal sacrifice.

According to the legend, Putri Mandalika decided to resolve the situation by ending her life, and jumped into the Indian Ocean from what is now Mandalika Hill.

It is said that the Nyale worms

are actually the princess's hair, with her people for ever.

VISITORS to Lombok in February, around the time of the Nyale Festival, have a wide range of accommodation available to them in the Kute area, including the Novotel Coralia Lombok on Pantai (Beach) Putri Nyale. Tour companies and the Central Lombok Regency Tourism Office have details.

See the schedule of event on page 18

