

THE STRAITS TIMES INTERACTIVE

Search STI GO

July 18, 2005 Mon

[WRITE TO US](#) | [FAQ](#) | [TAKE A TOUR](#)

[ARCHIVE](#) [M](#) [T](#) [W](#) [T](#) [F](#) [S](#) [S](#) [MORE](#)

gmacsg is logged in
[Update Info](#)
[Change Password](#)
[Sign in as different user](#)

SINGAPORE

I WANT TO SUBSCRIBE

[STI Home](#) > [Singapore](#) > [Story](#)

[PREV](#) [NEXT](#)

[STI Home](#)

[News](#)

[Latest News](#)

[The Print Edition](#)

[Prime News](#)

[Singapore](#)

[Asia](#)

[Money](#)

[World](#)

[Review](#)

[Sports](#)

[ST Forum](#)

[Our Columnists](#)

[Life!](#)

[Saturday Special Report](#)

[Supplements](#) [+]

[Webspecials](#) [+]

[Photo.Works](#) [+]

[Multimedia](#) [+]

[Services](#) [+]

July 18, 2005

Bio-treasure Isle

Semakau Landfill, an island where trash is dumped, now open to public to enjoy its rich biodiversity

By Sarah Ng

BY 2045, Singapore will have a brand new island as big as Sentosa - created out of incinerated trash.

But the public won't have to wait that long to enjoy the island. They can now fish, birdwatch and look at the marine life on mangrove mudflats there.

Semakau Landfill is the name of this new island, located 7km from Pasir Panjang Ferry Terminal.

The National Environment Agency is creating it by joining two islands - Pulau Semakau and Pulau Sakeng - with a man-made, saltwater lagoon where the rubbish will be dumped.

It is enclosed by a 7km-long rock bund, which is lined with an impermeable membrane and marine clay to prevent the trash from seeping out. The lagoon is also divided into several ponds, into which the rubbish is dumped.

Water is pumped out of the ponds and trash is compacted into them. As the ponds get filled up with rubbish, they are turfed over with grass and the island takes shape bit by bit.

The landfill took four years to build, and the first phase of construction cost \$610 million. The second phase, which will involve building more ponds, will start after the present 11 ponds are filled. With more waste being recycled, the landfill can now last until 2045.

Despite the trash being dumped there, the island is not smelly. That's because only ash and non-organic waste such as

[PRINT](#) | [FEEDBACK](#) | [EMAIL ARTICLE](#)

STORY INDEX

[This boy needs an oxygen tank to breathe](#)

[550 Microsoft employees to help community](#)

[Price not high for no-frills dialysis at private centres](#)

[SM Goh's remarks 'very frank'](#)

[Chinese standard has not dropped: PM Lee](#)

['Hiring' contest gets students fired up](#)

[Attack by crows in Marine Parade](#)

[ST's Little Red Dot proves of big use in class](#)

[Case File](#)

[Bus 925 now plies Kranji farm area](#)

[4 purr-fect cats](#)

[Quick News](#)

[Safrat pool reopens](#)

[Bio-treasure Isle](#)

[School on Sentosa? It's no beach holiday](#)

[More young lawyers quit Bar](#)

[Happy to be back](#)

advertisement · explore within this space

EUR/USD	
Sell	Buy
1.24	1.24
11	14
Low	High
1.2400	1.2490

The EURO is EASY to trade.

▶▶ See How With a **FREE PRACTICE ACCOUNT**

[CLICK HERE](#)

FXCM 24 Hour Commission-Free Currency Trading

FXCM is compensated for its services through the bid/ask spread. Forex trading involves significant risk of loss and may not be suitable for all investors.

construction materials are put in.

It is also home to rich marine life such as barracuda, trevally, sea bass and milk fish. It also has 54 species of birds such as the endangered great-billed heron, the Pacific reef egret and the Malaysian plover. Its mangrove mudflats are bigger than 20 football fields and are rich with seagrass, giant sea anemones and sea urchins.

People can visit the island, but they will have to book their visits through three recreational and nature groups - the Sport Fishing Association Singapore (SFAS), Nature Society Singapore and the Raffles Museum of Biodiversity Research.

The SFAS will conduct monthly fishing trips that cost \$40 per person. The other two groups are still working out schedules for guided tours.

The landfill is an example of how a rubbish dump and environment conservation can co-exist, said Dr Yaacob Ibrahim, Minister for the Environment and Water Resources. He opened it for recreation on Saturday morning.

Speaking to reporters after a tour of the landfill, Dr Yaacob said: 'One possibility is opening this up to schools for excursions. We can build basic facilities for them to spend the night here so that they can do a bit of stargazing and birdwatching.'

About 350 guests visited the scenic and breezy landfill on Saturday, including 150 people from 40 families who used to live on Pulau Sakeng. They moved to the mainland in 1994 to make way for the project.

Mr Teo Yen Eng, 81, who lived on Pulau Sakeng for more than 30 years with his brother Yen Tek, 74, was among them. The two men used to run a provision shop on the island.

'The best thing about this place is the fresh air and lack of pollution. I'm glad it's still the same now, even though it has become a rubbish dump,' said the elder Mr Teo.

Said another former resident, Mr Haji Chani Dualip, 60: 'It's good that it is now open to the public, so more people can come and enjoy its beauty.'

Those keen on visiting the landfill should contact Sport Fishing Association Singapore at www.sfas.net, the Nature Society at membership@nss.org.sg, or the Raffles Museum of Biodiversity Research at rnbr.nus.edu.sg

ngsls@sph.com.sg

- [Ideals dampened, he opts to run family restaurant](#)
- [Why teens found Hitler cool](#)
- [It shouldn't have been allowed](#)
- [Hip and happening](#)
- [Let's talk about materialism](#)
- [Value people above possessions](#)
- [What's in a pair of old jeans? Plenty](#)
- [A little retail therapy never hurt anyone](#)

[<< PREV](#) [NEXT >>](#)

SUBSCRIBE TO THE STRAITS TIMES PRINT EDITION TODAY. IN IT YOU GET EXCLUSIVE REPORTS, ANALYSES AND NEWS PACKAGES.

DO IT BY:  FAX  ONLINE

SERVICES: | [NEWS ON PDA](#) | [WEATHER](#) | [SITE MAP](#) | [FAQ](#) | [ABOUT US](#) | [ADVERTISE](#) | [F.Y.I.](#) | [RSS](#) | [BACK TO TOP](#)

THE STRAITS TIMES INTERACTIVE

COPYRIGHT © 2005 SINGAPORE PRESS HOLDINGS LTD. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. PRIVACY STATEMENT. TERMS & CONDITIONS. BEST VIEWED IN 800X600 RESOLUTION WITH INTERNET EXPLORER 6 OR NETSCAPE NAVIGATOR 7 OR ABOVE. CO. REGN. NO. 198402868E