NEXT EDITION

Here’s to a good harvest!

Despite everything, we hope for a good mango harvest as in previous years. Today, 23 November 2026, it did not rain in Silimalombu for the first time in 61 days. And some of the mango trees are still in full blossom. In the next edition: the 2027 harvest and the wine of Mangga Samosir.





Send us news from your garden and business

Photos of old trees, stories from the elders, notes on the blossom season, mango recipes, ideas for tourism on Samosir – send them to the editors by WhatsApp.

All editions: laketoba.net/mangga-samosir-news
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Email: r@laketoba.net
Ecovillage Silimalombu · Desa Silimalombu · Kec. Onan Runggu · Kab. Samosir 22394

Follow the WhatsApp channel “Mangga Samosir News” – new editions and short news straight to your phone. Scan the QR code, then tap “Follow”.

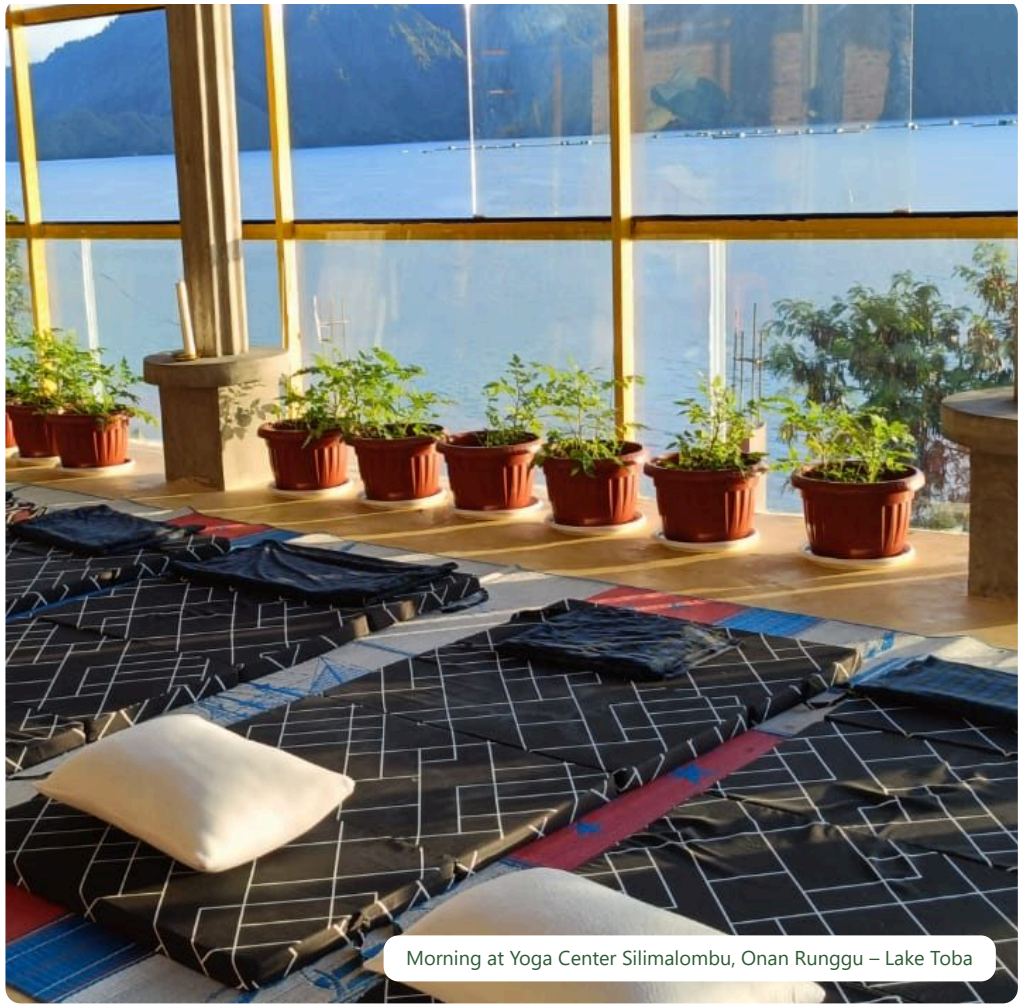
Mangga Samosir News

EDITION 3 NOVEMBER 2026 SAMOSIR · LAKE TOBA

SPECIAL EDITION · SAMOSIR TOURISM SEMINAR · 27 NOVEMBER 2026

Nine steps to a welcoming Samosir

- Bus, boat and cable car to the lake
- Clean villages, clean air
- Artificial rain in the blossom season
- Mango leaf tea · Miranda



Morning at Yoga Center Silimalombu, Onan Runggu – Lake Toba

FROM THE EDITORS

Horas, dear seminar participants!

We prepared this edition for the tourism seminar of Kabupaten Samosir on 27 November 2026 at Hotel Labersa. We thank Bapak Bupati Vandiko T. Gultom and the head of the Office of Culture and Tourism, Ibu Tetti Naibaho, for bringing government, business and community together.



Ratna doing *aerial yoga* in Bali.

The first part contains **nine proposals** from our daily experience with guests (pages 3–12). The second part tells of a difficult season in the mango garden: smoke, rain every single day – and artificial rain in the middle of the blossom season (pages 13–18).

Our chairwoman Ratnauli Gultom has just returned from yoga training in Bali – you never stop learning. Her birthday is on 20 September; the day after, a plane began seeding the clouds over Lake Toba – a present she never asked for.

In this edition

Nine steps to a welcoming Samosir 3
Getting there: bus, boat, Silangit, one information point 4
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Mangga Samosir News · Edition 3 · November 2026 · English translation
Published by Ecovillage Silimalombu for members and friends of MPIG Mangga Samosir ·
Responsible: Ratnauli Gultom · Desa Silimalombu, Kec. Onan Runggu, Kab. Samosir 22394 ·
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READERS' FORUM

Good ideas grow when they are shared

Mangga Samosir News wants to be a place for ideas for Samosir and Indonesia – and new ideas become reality when many people think along, ask, disagree and add.

How to join the discussion

1. **Scan the QR code** in the "Join in!" box at the end of each article. WhatsApp opens with the topic code, e.g. `#MTN03-AKSES`.
2. **Write your question, idea or experience** – very short, with a photo if you like.
3. **The editors reply** and publish question and answer on laketoba.net under the article. Good questions are also printed in the next edition.



Everyone is used to scanning QRIS codes. With QR codes we can do even more!

The full text online

All articles of this edition can be read (in Indonesian) at **laketoba.net/mangga-samosir-news** – with a WhatsApp button for each chapter and all questions and answers so far. This English edition can be downloaded there as a PDF. Please share the link with family, friends and business partners.

Good to know: we may publish your message on laketoba.net and in this newspaper – **without your phone number**, and with your name only if you agree (write "name may be published"). Answers are prepared with the help of artificial intelligence (AI) and checked by the editors. Questions about licences, authorities, health and prices are always answered by the editors themselves.

Join in!

Do you have a proposal for tourism on Samosir or for the next edition, or would you like to write yourself? Send it to us.

Scan the QR code → WhatsApp `#MTN03-FORUM`

Step by step – as Miranda explains it

1. **Picking:** “So, first we pick the mango leaves.”
2. **Washing:** “Usually we wash them with spring water or rainwater.”
3. **In the sun:** “We put them in the sun for an hour.”
4. **Drying in the shade:** “Then we take them to a place without sun and dry them there for a week.”
5. **Before packing:** “We put them in the sun once more for about five minutes, and only then do they go into our product.”





The leaves are picked one by one – then washed and dried.

How to brew (our suggestion): 1 teaspoon of leaves per cup, pour on boiling water, steep for 5–10 minutes. Also delicious cold, with a little honey and lime. · Price in Silimalombu: 50 k.

Watch the video – 2 minutes on YouTube: Miranda makes mango leaf tea (in Indonesian)
youtu.be/hk4NCD0RC0I

Join in!

First step: Order a pack of mango leaf tea – or dry leaves from your own tree.
Our question to you: Has your family ever used mango leaves – as a remedy, side dish or drink?

Scan the QR code → WhatsApp **#MTN03-PRODUK**

SPECIAL EDITION · TOURISM SEMINAR

Nine steps to a welcoming Samosir



Bapak Bupati Vandiko T. Gultom with residents and tourism operators on a boat on Lake Toba (photo: Silimalombu).

The seminar aims to work out “concrete steps” for tourism on Samosir. As a small business in Onan Runggu we would like to contribute – with nine proposals from our daily experience with guests.

1	· A punctual bus from the airport to the lake	4
2	· Scheduled boats along the coast of Samosir	5
3	· From Silangit straight to the lake	6
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9	· Tuak Trail Tomok – Silimalombu	12

Good service starts before the guest arrives – at the airport, on the bus, on the boat, on the village road. We have described every proposal in more detail on laketoba.net; each page has a QR code.

IDEA FOR SAMOSIR · 1 · GETTING THERE

A punctual bus from the airport to the lake

Tourists love Lake Toba. But anyone landing at Kualanamu first asks: when does the bus leave, how long does it take, where do I get off – and can I book a seat now?

A good start has been made: the Sejahtera bus runs daily from Amplas terminal to Ajibata port, and there are minibuses from the airport. What is still missing is a fixed, reliable timetable that guests from abroad can book as well.

Our proposal: a Lake Toba bus line

- **Amplas terminal**, Medan
- **Kualanamu Airport (KNO)**
- **Tebing Tinggi toll exit** · **Sinaksak exit**
- **Panei** · **Pantai Bebas Parapat**
- **Ajibata port** – connecting to the boat to Samosir

- **Every 2 hours**, with a timetable to the minute – Sundays and holidays too.
- **Comfortable buses**: air conditioning, luggage space, a seat for every passenger.
- **Book online**, and pay with an international card.
- **Bus and boat wait for each other** in Ajibata.

For bus companies this is an opportunity: regular passengers all year round – because guests come when they can rely on the timetable.

How to get to Lake Toba today – all routes, prices and contacts
laketoba.net/directions

OUR PRODUCT · FROM KEBUN RAYA SILIMALOMBU

Mango leaf tea from Silimalombu



Miranda Gultom picking mango leaves in Silimalombu, 8 November 2026.

"Right now I'm picking mango leaves for tea. We are making this mango leaf tea into a product."

Mango fruits are only around for a few weeks a year – the leaves all year round, even in a season with little fruit like this one. In India mango leaves are boiled as a traditional drink; in West Java young leaves are eaten raw as a side dish (lalapan). In Silimalombu Miranda Gultom dries the leaves of the Mangga Samosir into tea: mild in taste, a little like green tea, without caffeine.

Mango leaves contain **mangiferin**, an antioxidant that is being widely researched – but most studies are still laboratory studies. Miranda also mentions effects that people often talk about, for example on blood sugar and digestion.

> **To be honest:** mango leaf tea is a tasty, healthy drink, **not a medicine**. If you take diabetes medication, are pregnant or are allergic to mango sap, ask your doctor first.

Learning all kinds of things



Stills from the video, 5 and 8 November 2026.

"Here I even learned to cook: healthy food for guests, *no MSG*. Everything we cook comes purely from our own gardens." The chickens are home-raised, the fish and lobster come from the lake.

And English? "Before, I couldn't speak English well. I'm learning it here. I learn by doing."

Watch the interview – 3 minutes on YouTube, Miranda's first interview (in Indonesian)
youtu.be/277-OHW4PUE

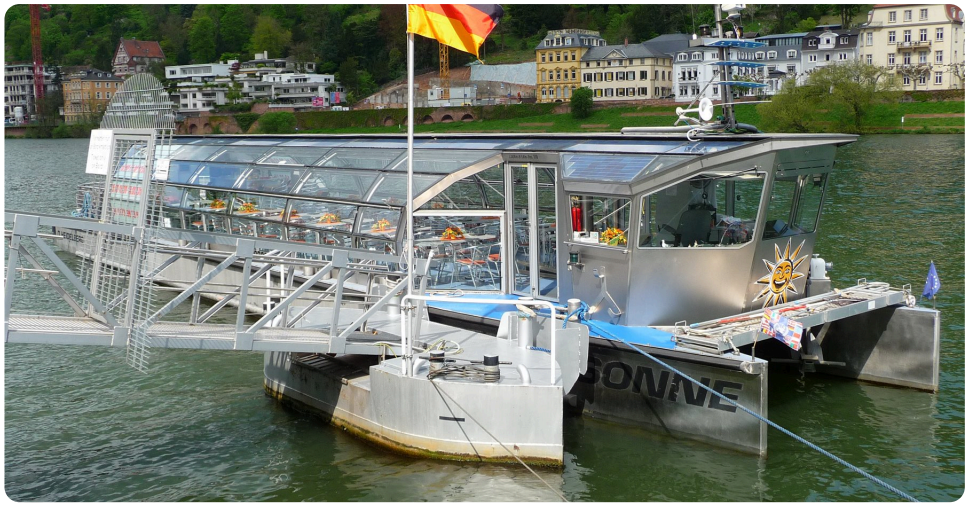
Join in!

First step: Send Miranda a greeting or a question.
Our question to you: What have you learned simply by doing it? Would you like to learn like Miranda? Jobs at laketoba.net/lowongan.

Scan the QR code → WhatsApp **#MTN03-WAJAH**

IDEA FOR SAMOSIR · 2 · BOATS

Scheduled boats along the coast of Samosir



A boat like this would suit Lake Toba: the solar boat "Neckarsonne" in Heidelberg, Germany – solar powered, silent, with a restaurant on deck. Photo: 4028mdk09, Wikimedia Commons (CC BY-SA 3.0), commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Solarschiff_Heidelberg.JPG

Many tourist villages on Samosir lie on the lakeshore. But the boats between these villages usually only leave when they are full – or when someone charters them.

Our proposal: **a scheduled passenger boat every 2 hours** from Silimalombu via Lontung, Tomok and Tuktuk to Siallagan in Ambarita – and back. With a fixed timetable, guests can stay in one place and explore others: eat in Tomok, shop in Tuktuk, see the stone chairs of Siallagan. Villagers can use it too, to get to market and to school.

For boat owners: a fixed timetable means a fixed income. To start, a shared timetable is enough – at every jetty and online. Solar boats can follow: no petrol, no smell, no noise.

Boats in Silimalombu – transfers, rentals and prices
laketoba.net/tours-transfers-rentals

IDEA FOR SAMOSIR · 3 · SILANGIT AIRPORT

From Silangit straight to the lake

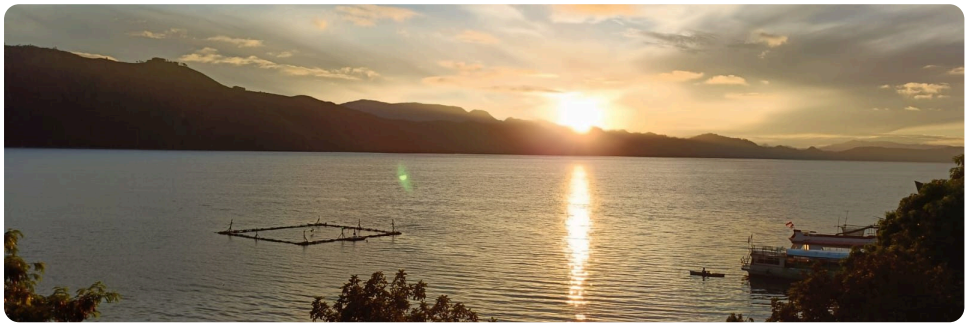
From Silangit Airport to the beach of Meat on Lake Toba it is only about 5 kilometres. This short stretch could become an attraction in itself.

Cable car Silangit – Meat

A mono-cable ropeway, such as the Austrian company Doppelmayr builds, takes guests down to the lake in ±15 minutes – luggage included, without waiting. It can carry up to 5,000 people per hour. We estimate the construction cost at about 6 million US dollars; a cable car lasts for decades.

Solar boat with restaurant

From Meat a large solar boat takes guests to Balige, Samosir and Parapat – quietly, cleanly, with food on board. There is an example in Heidelberg, Germany: the solar catamaran "Neckarsonne" carries about 250 passengers on the river Neckar, silently and without exhaust fumes.



Our proposal: the Kabupaten – together with the neighbouring regencies and the Lake Toba Authority (Badan Otorita Danau Toba) – invites companies to build and operate the cable car and solar boats as a public-private partnership (KPBU), so that the regional budget is not burdened.

Full concept: access to Lake Toba – cable car, solar boat, map
laketoba.net/development-lake-toba

FACES OF SILIMALOMBU

Miranda Gultom: "I learn by doing"



Miranda with mango leaves for tea, 8 November 2026.

"I'm only 20 this year." Miranda Gultom has been working in Silimalombu for more than a year. She is part of our extended family and lives just 500 metres from the garden.

Miranda works in production and serves guests. "I'm also learning to make tea – all the teas come from our own gardens. I'm also learning to make jam and sambal."

One of the products she makes is **mango leaf tea** – on pages 21–22 Miranda shows how it is done.

Why mangoes?

"Because here we have mango trees that are hundreds of years old – the one we can call Opung Ni Mangga. In every mango *high season* we harvest tons of mangoes here." Many products are made from the fruit, but also from the leaves.

From shy to confident: "Before, I couldn't speak freely in front of guests, I was afraid. But here I have learned a lot. So everything, whatever it is, I learned here."

MAIN STORY · SAMOSIR'S MANGO FARMERS

1,907 mango farmers – not one was asked

Mangoes are not just roadside fruit. According to regency data, Kabupaten Samosir has **9,263 mango trees**, **1,907 mango farmers** and **392 mango traders**.

District (Kecamatan)	Mango trees	Farmers	Traders
Sianjur Mulamula	1,167	401	5
Harian	2,024	442	17
Sitiotio	120	19	–
Onan Runggu	190	52	5
Nainggolan	225	65	5
Palipi	1,275	156	7
Pangururan	1,865	575	121
Simanindo	2,397	197	232
Kabupaten Samosir	**9,263**	**1,907**	**392**

Data from the Dinas Pertanian (Agriculture Office) of Kabupaten Samosir, November 2026 – a good first step for the geographical indication Mangga Samosir. **These figures still need to be validated:** in Silimalombu alone (Kec. Onan Runggu) there are far more than 190 mango trees. Probably not all villages have counted yet – the potential is much greater.

> **A simple calculation (editors' estimate):** if an old tree gives only 100 kg of fruit and a kilo sells for 15 k at the roadside, 9,263 trees are worth **±14 billion rupiah** per season – as a minimum, not counting jam, sambal and other products.

In the middle of the blossom season of exactly these trees, more rain was made on purpose. As far as we know, **not one** of the 1,907 farmers and 392 traders was asked, informed or heard. No announcement in the village, no meeting, no damage assessment. Only megawatts were counted.

For us this is no longer a question of weather but of justice. If the lake's water is used to power a factory, then the people who live from the lake and their gardens have a right to be asked beforehand – and to compensation if their harvest is lost.

Join in!

First step: Record the damage in your garden this year – how many trees blossomed, how many bear fruit – with photos.
Our question to you: Were you ever asked or informed before artificial rain?

Scan the QR code → WhatsApp `#MTN03-HUJAN`

IDEA FOR SAMOSIR · 4 · INFORMATION

One place: easy to get there, easy to get back

Before they book a hotel, all tourists ask: how do I get there – and how do I get back again?

Today the answers are scattered across many places. Ferry and bus timetables are hard to find, and in our guests' experience foreign tourists can hardly book ferry tickets online.

Our proposal: a Lake Toba information platform

- **All providers** in one place: bus, shared taxi, ferry, tour boat, car and motorbike rental – with contact and link.
- **Up-to-date timetables**, in Indonesian and English.
- **Bookable and payable** for foreign guests too – with passport and international card.
- **Run jointly** by the tourism office, transport office, ASDP, transport companies and hotels.

A free tool to start with already exists: **Wikitravel**, a travel guide that anyone can add to in any language. We have been updating its Lake Toba page since 2018 – every regency, district and village can get its own page.

Wikitravel Lake Toba project – how to fill the free travel guide
laketoba.net/development-lake-toba/wikitravel

Join in!

First step: Send us the timetable and contact of your transport company – we will add them to laketoba.net.
Our question to you: What is hardest for your guests on the way to Samosir?

Scan the QR code → WhatsApp `#MTN03-AKSES`

IDEA FOR SAMOSIR · 5 · CLEAN VILLAGES

Don’t burn waste – waste can become a business

Smoke from burning rubbish is the first greeting no tourist wants. You can smell it from far away – in the village, on the beach, along the roads.

Open burning of waste is in fact already banned by the Waste Management Law (UU 18/2008). What is missing now is a simple alternative for every household – and sorted waste really is worth something.

Three business ideas

- **Wet waste → compost.** Kitchen and garden scraps become compost that is sold to farmers and gardeners.
- **Plastic → money.** Plastic sorted by type has a price at the dealer. A village waste bank can collect it.
- **Residual plastic → fuel.** A pyrolysis plant turns mixed plastic into heating oil – a community business for a BUMDes or cooperative.





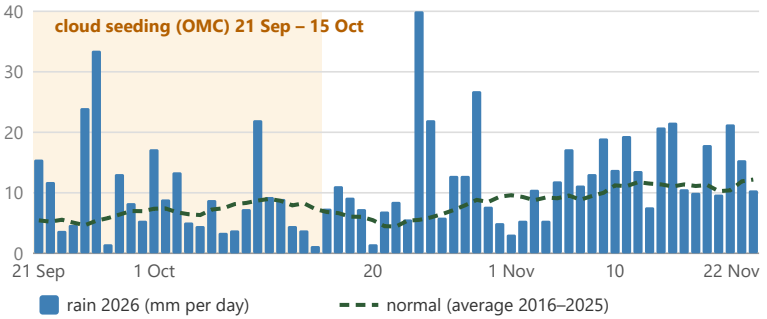
From fruit and garden scraps: eco enzyme (natural cleaner) and compost tea from Silimalombu.

In Silimalombu we separate glass, iron, aluminium, PET and PE, cardboard and batteries, and reuse everything that is still usable.

Our idea: one truck, two directions. A yellow truck collects wet waste from markets, hotels, restaurants and households on a fixed schedule – and on the same round delivers compost to farmers and gardens. Start-up capital about 1 billion rupiah, 6 workers, ±2–3 t of wet waste per day, ±200 t of compost per year; from the second year the business pays for itself *(editors’ estimate)*. This also makes the burning ban enforceable.

Full concept: compost truck and pyrolysis
laketoba.net/waste

Rain every single day



Daily rainfall in Silimalombu, 21 September – 22 November 2026. Dashed line: ten-year average 2016–2025. Source: ERA5 weather data (Copernicus) via Open-Meteo.

63 of 63
days with rain (more than 1 mm) – this never happened in the last ten years

+43 %
rain compared with normal: ±725 mm, on average ±505 mm

Since the cloud seeding began there has not been a single day without rain in Silimalombu. And even after 15 October the rain did not stop.

To be honest: nobody can say for sure how much of this rain came from cloud seeding – BMKG itself gives no figure. This year’s weather is also influenced by El Niño, the Indian Ocean and the smoke. BMKG states that OMC does not cause disasters. But one thing is certain: **in the middle of the blossom season, more rain was made on purpose** – and according to BMKG itself, on Samosir Island too.

Who owns the lake?

The water of Lake Toba flows out through only one river: the Asahan. There PT Inalum runs two hydropower plants with 603 megawatts for the aluminium smelter in Kuala Tanjung. “This is our fuel,” said Nando Purba from Inalum’s operations to journalists in October 2025. In September 2026 Inalum could generate only 430 megawatts – the way out: artificial rain. The head of BMKG said in April 2026: “OMC will certainly be carried out more and more often to secure the inflow for the dam.”

MAIN STORY · ARTIFICIAL RAIN

Artificial rain in the blossom season – for whom?

On 21 September 2026, as the Mangga Samosir trees began to blossom, a small plane took off from Silangit Airport – to seed the clouds over Lake Toba so that more rain would fall.

This weather modification (OMC) was carried out by **BMKG**, **Perum Jasa Tirta I** and **PT Inalum**, the state-owned aluminium company, for 25 days until 15 October 2026. The aim according to BMKG: to raise the level of Lake Toba. On the first day alone, BMKG says, the water level rose by 15 millimetres.

It was not the first time this year. The same operation ran from 9 April to 3 May 2026 – by 29 April, 33 seeding flights had been counted. The result according to BMKG's own evaluation: rainfall in the Lake Toba catchment increased, "especially in the east and south-east, including Samosir Island".

Silimalombu lies in the south-east of Samosir Island – exactly in the area with more rain according to BMKG.

The timing could not be worse

September to November is the blossom season of the Mangga Samosir, when the flowers need sun, dry air and flying bees. The cloud seeding took place right in this period – and official announcements say not a word about the fruit farmers.

2×
cloud seedings in 2026: 9 Apr – 3 May, 21 Sep – 15 Oct

0
notifications to farmers on Samosir that we know of

Timeline 2026
9 Apr – 3 May: first cloud seeding · Sep: Inalum only 430 of 603 MW · 21 Sep: second cloud seeding begins, mango trees in blossom · from ±7 Oct: smoke from forest fires · 15 Oct: operation ends – daily rain continues · Nov: blossoms dried up, hardly any fruit.

Video by Morita News about Inalum
Morita News: medium of Yayasan Pencinta Danau Toba (YPDT)

IDEA FOR SAMOSIR · 6 · DOGS

Well-trained dogs, quiet villages



Tourists want to walk: from the homestay to the lake, from village to village. But on many paths a barking pack greets them – and many no longer dare.

The number of dogs in the villages is growing fast. One family keeps several bitches, then a dozen puppies grow up without training. At night there is a "dog concert" almost every hour – guests and children can hardly sleep.

Tuktuk already has a rule banning free-roaming dogs. For all of Samosir we propose a middle way: dogs remain part of the village. A well-trained dog is the "village police" guarding house and livestock – what matters is that the dog knows who its master is.

Our proposal: simple village rules – dogs kept in the yard or tied up at night, rabies vaccination for every dog, an upper limit. Our A4 leaflet "Our village can't sleep!" may be copied and distributed.

Dog leaflet – read and download (PDF, in Indonesian)
laketoba.net/development-lake-toba/anjing-kampung

Join in!

First step: Ask for the dog leaflet, or tell us about a waste project in your village.
Our question to you: How does your village deal with waste and dogs?
Scan the QR code → WhatsApp **#MTN03-KAMPUNG**

IDEA FOR SAMOSIR · 7 · AIR AND WEATHER

Clean air and reliable seasons

This year two things kept guests away: smoke from forest fires, and rain that almost never stops.



Endless rain: a gutter in Silimalombu, 24 October 2026.

Since early October, smoke from southern Sumatra and Kalimantan has covered Lake Toba – reaching as far as Singapore and Malaysia, where many tourists come from. Since 21 September it has rained in Silimalombu every day. At the same time the clouds over Lake Toba were seeded to raise the lake level (pages 16–18). In Silimalombu room bookings fell by about 90 %.

Advertising, festivals and new hotels are of little use when the air is not breathable and the weather unpredictable. Clean air is the most basic capital of tourism.

Our proposals

- **Burn nothing** – not land, not fields, not rubbish; our own small fires add to the smoke too.
- **Artificial rain only after consultation** with farmers and tourism, announced in advance – and not during the blossom season or the holidays.
- **Publish air and weather data** every day – for guests and for ourselves.

Join in!

First step: Write down how many guests cancelled during the smoke and rain.
Our question to you: What has your business lost this year?

Scan the QR code → WhatsApp **#MTN03-UDARA**

MAIN STORY · IN THE GARDEN

Many blossoms, few fruits



Silimalombu, 8 November 2026: the Mangga Samosir blossoms have dried up – only a few young fruits.

Michael, a permaculture student from Hong Kong, came to Silimalombu to get to know our forest – above all the mangoes, but also coffee and cocoa. In Hong Kong he grows coffee himself.



Michael from Hong Kong.

On his first walks through the forest he saw so many mango trees and asked: how are the mangoes growing this year, with the changed climate? On 8 November 2026 we showed him our trees.

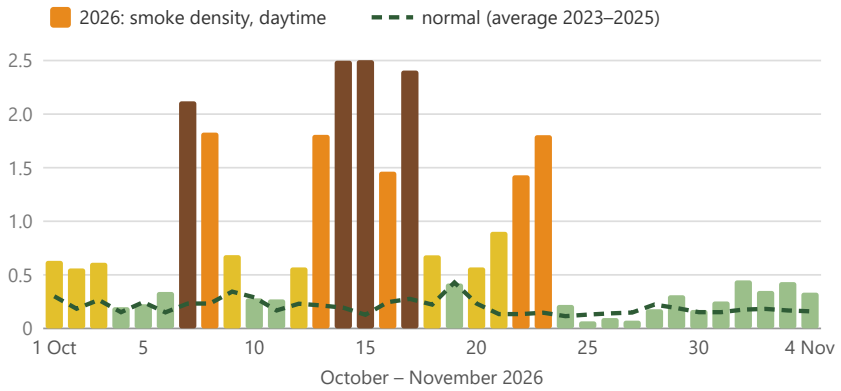
What we saw was sad: the trees blossomed very richly, but because of the rain only very few fruits have set. The existing fruits are still very small, and many blossoms are rotting. Without sun the bees don't fly, and the rain washes the pollen out of the flowers. We suspect it looks the same all around Lake Toba.





Rich blossom, hardly any fruit – the same on branch after branch.

How dark is our sky?



Smoke and dust density of the air (*aerosol optical depth*), average 8 am – 4 pm, over Silimalombu. About 0.2 = normal sky; above 2 = the sun is only a pale disc. Source: Copernicus satellite model (CAMS) via Open-Meteo.

±1/10
of direct sunlight still reached the ground on the worst days (14–17 Oct) – estimate

173
Air Quality Index (AQI) on 16 October – "unhealthy", almost four times the normal level

Dark sky – small fruit?

Mangoes grow from the sugar that leaves make with the help of sunlight. Less light means less sugar. In oil palm plantations in Jambi, the 2015 smoke reduced sunlight by about a third – and a few months later the harvest fell by up to half. Studies on mangoes show: when the tree lacks "power" from its leaves, the fruits become lighter.

In Silimalombu our bees hardly left the hive. In damp, dull weather mango pollen swells and is released poorly, and constantly wet blossoms are easily attacked by fungi (anthracnose). We fear that the harvest in January–February 2027 will be smaller and the fruits smaller than this blossom promised. Only the harvest will tell – **and we will weigh it together with you**.

Join in!

First step: Photograph a blossom or fruit cluster in your garden now – and the same branch again next month.
Our question to you: How are blossom and bees doing in your garden this year?
Scan the QR code → WhatsApp **#MTN03-FESTIVAL**

IDEA FOR SAMOSIR · 8 · TRADITIONAL DRINKS

Tuak and fruit wine: protected, safe, valuable

Tuak (palm wine) is part of Batak Toba identity – in the lapo, at adat ceremonies, in the village and far from home. Yet today lapos and makers of traditional drinks operate in a legal grey zone.

That is why we drafted a **Regent's Regulation on traditional fermented and/or distilled drinks from Samosir** and handed it to Bapak Bupati. With this Perbup, Samosir could become the first regency to regulate its own traditional drinks.

Legal certainty
Registered, clean lapos have a clear legal basis.

Safety
No more methanol: every batch of distillate is tested in a laboratory.

Income
Palm sap, mangoes and garden produce gain value.

Tourism
"Certified Lapo Tuak Samosir", competitions and a Tuak festival.

Free registration instead of a new licence, basic training of 1–2 days in the village, a 6-month transition period. No alcohol for minors and no sales online.

Mango wine Mangga Samosir from fallen fruit: we handed our licence application to Bapak Bupati on 3 June 2026. The Perbup can open the way for all producers on Samosir. **21+**


Benny Situmorang in his lapo tuak in Lontung.

Draft Perbup on Samosir's traditional drinks – benefits, implementation, timetable (in Indonesian)
laketoba.net/development-lake-toba/perbup-minuman-khas-samosir

IDEA FOR SAMOSIR · 9 · TUAK TRAIL

From Whisky Trail to Tuak Trail Tomok – Silimalombu



Lapo Rock'n'Roll of Benny Situmorang in Lontung: tradition, and how young people enjoy the evening.

Scotland has the *Malt Whisky Trail*: tourists travel from distillery to distillery, taste, learn and stay in the villages around.

Samosir has the ingredients for something similar: tuak, a drink with history and stories. The idea: **Tuak Trail Tomok – Silimalombu**. Tourists stop at clean, friendly lapos, taste fresh tuak, hear the stories of the palm tappers – and at the end of the trail, wine and brandy from Mangga Samosir. The scheduled boat (page 5) brings them safely back.





MPIG chairwoman Ratnauli Gultom visiting Lapo Rock'n'Roll, October 2026.

Video, 1 minute – a visit to Lapo Rock'n'Roll in Lontung **21+**

Join in!

First step: Tell us about your favourite lapo on the road Tomok – Silimalombu.
Our question to you: What does the Tuak Trail need so that tourists stop?

Scan the QR code → WhatsApp `#MTN03-MINUMAN`

MAIN STORY · ON THE WAY TO THE HARVEST

Full blossom, grey sky



View from Silimalombu, 24 October 2026: the mountains on the far shore almost disappear in rain and smoke.

It has been a long time since the Mangga Samosir trees blossomed as richly as this year. But since early October the sun has hardly been seen – and the rain almost never stops.

Since about 7 October, smoke from forest and land fires has hung over Lake Toba. According to BMKG the wind carries it from southern Sumatra; other reports also name Kalimantan. No fire hotspots were found in North Sumatra itself. At times visibility on the lake was only ±500 metres and the ferries were disrupted. The same smoke also lay over Singapore and Malaysia. At the end of October the air was clear for a few days – in early November the smoke returned.

Then the rain: from 1 October to 4 November, Silimalombu received ±340 mm – about **one third more** than usual (ten-year average ±260 mm). Since 16 October there has also been weather modification ordered by the governor – and even before that, from 21 September to 15 October, the clouds over Lake Toba were seeded to raise the lake level (page 16).

Molo litok aek di toruan,
tingkiron ma tu julu.

If the water downstream is murky, look upstream. – Batak proverb

The smoke at Lake Toba can only be fought where it starts: on the land that is being burned.