

Essay on Delayed

The other day I went to the General Post Office to post a registered letter. It was close to five in the evening and I thought that would be a time when the counters were less crowded. I was wrong. Queues of people waited at the counters.

I joined the line to the 'Pendaftaran' counter.

Patiently I waited for the ones in front of me to get their job done. I was supposed to meet a friend at five-thirty and I was sure I could post the letter and still meet him in time after all his house was a mere five minutes' walk from the GPO. I had a bicycle.

Five past five and my turn came. I handed my letter to the girl at the counter. She indicated that there were no stamps on the letter and asked me to get the stamps at the next counter. I felt a bit annoyed but quietly turned to move over to the next counter. Oh God, the queue was even longer than the one I was in! Muttering under my breath I joined the queue just in time to beat another guy to it.

It felt like ages standing in line before I was within striking distance of the stamp counter. Finally, when there was only one lady in front of me, the counter girl got up from her seat and vanished into the interior of the post office. Wow, I was mad! There was only one stamp counter open and that particular counter was unattended. Effectively then the Post Office ceased to sell stamps for a good five minutes before this girl. reappeared. Everybody in the queue was heated up. was sure if she had delayed any longer, one of us would have gone straight into the Postmaster's office and complained.

By the time I managed to get my letter weighed and the stamps bought, it was already five twenty. Unnecessary delays, I thought. Still, I

could make it to my friend's place on time.

Again, I was wrong! I had to queue up again to register my letter. So slowly, oh so slowly the queue moved. After being delayed twice in a short time I was feeling a bit irritated. I told myself that patience is a virtue and I should not get angry over trivialities like being delayed:

My turn came, or so I thought. Right in front of me the girl at the counter collected all the previous registered letters and started chopping them in a few places each. Bang, bang, goes the sound of the chop coming down on the ink pad then to the letters. I waited, still patiently.

Finally, she finished her task and began to serve me. She took the letter and pasted the necessary label on it. Just when she was about to write me the registration slip, from out of nowhere one inconsiderate chap barged to the counter. This unkempt young man waved a letter in his hand and started asking the girl questions. I could not make out what he was saying. Neither could she, for, after a little while, I could see her getting angry. I was already angry and told the chap in no uncertain terms, "Go and queue up!"

He glared at me. I glared back. I was not about to be delayed anymore. His mouth quivered and muttered something. I muttered something back. Then in unison, the equally angry people behind me muttered at him. His face turned sheepish for a moment he wondered what to do. Finally, he gave up and walked to the back of the queue.

I took my precious registration slip from the counter girl and moved towards my bicycle. I glanced at the huge clock on the wall. Five forty minutes to post a registered letter was ridiculous! Ah, never mind, I thought, but my friend must be mad at me. I hurried to his

house.

When I reached his house, his face was all red. We were supposed to cycle to another friend's house quite a distance away and if we were going to make it on time we would have to leave immediately and cycle quickly.

He leaped onto his bicycle and pedaled five feet before he stopped. His back tire was flat! Wow, I thought, what a day! We were delayed once again.