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KUALA Lumpur is a favourite holiday destination as it provides travellers the opportunity to connect with nature and engage in recreational activities at city parks such as KL Forest Eco Park, Perdana Botanical Garden and KLCC Park.

The Malaysia Hotel Guest Survey conducted by Tourism Malaysia found 12,611,715 tourists visited Kuala Lumpur in 2022, with about 34% of them coming from overseas.

Declared a forest reserve in 1970, KL Forest Eco Park, which is just around the corner from bustling Bukit Bintang, is home to some 431 plant and 12 mammal species.

Green lungs of Kuala Lumpur

Peninsular Malaysia Forestry Department (JPSM) deputy director-general (policy and planning) Datuk Zahari Ibrahim told *StarMetro* that the 9.37ha park on Jalan Puncak was the only primary natural forest area in Kuala Lumpur.

“It is also known as the ‘green lung area’ in Kuala Lumpur.

“The park offers various recreational facilities such as canopy walk, forest trails, camping site, and recreational grounds,” he said.

Zahari said JPSM introduced the Forest Therapy Programme in 2018.

“Tropical rainforests like the one in KL Forest Eco Park can play a therapeutic role, as one can naturally reduce stress (when in the forest) and improve attention span and creativity,” he said.

He noted that the park saw 62,732 visitors last year, with almost half of them being foreign tourists.

Under the National Forestry Act 1984, anyone who wants to go into a forest reserve must obtain a permit from JPSM.

“JPSM has imposed a park entry fee of RM10 for Malaysian adults and RM40 for non-Malaysian adults,” said Zahari.

“The fee is also in line with the National Forestry Practices (Federal Territories) 2019,” he said.

He added that the park received a RM250,000 allocation from the Tourism Arts and Culture Ministry for infrastructure upgrades this year.

Also termed the ‘lungs of the city’, is Perdana Botanical Garden in Jalan Kebun Bunga, Kuala Lumpur.

It houses various attractions such as the Sunken Garden,

Boosting tourism through city parks

Visitors can enjoy recreational facilities like canopy walks, forest trails and camping sites



A family feeding fish at Perdana Botanical Garden, Kuala Lumpur. — Photos: AZHAR MAHFOF, LEW GUAN XI and LOW BOON TAT/The Star



A little girl celebrating her seventh birthday at KLCC Park during the ‘Picnic in The Park’ event.

Orchid Garden, Hibiscus Garden, Fragrance and Wedding gardens.

In a statement to *StarMetro*, Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) Landscape Development and Recreation Department said the Orchid Garden and Hibiscus Garden were upgraded in March this year, and that it was working on readying the gardens.

City Hall plans to turn the two gardens into the park’s new iconic attractions.

The 1ha Orchid Garden is a semi-circular pergola comprising some 120 species of epiphytes.

The 0.4ha Hibiscus Garden showcases various species of the national flower.

Other attractions at the park include an artificial waterfall

and a water fountain.

DBKL also plans to upgrade the park infrastructure to promote outdoor environmental education.

Other amenities to be upgraded include a nature trail, gymnasium and garden cafe.

About 350,000 people visited the park last year, the department said, adding that Pangung Anniversari had staged various local and international events.

The “Rockestra Legenda” concert will be held in Pangung Anniversari on July 20.

Polish tourists Joanna Kurczewska and Aleksandra Stojek said although Perdana Botanical Garden was located in the city centre, the greenery in the park blocked out the skyscrapers.

“There are also a lot of tropical plants in the park that we have never seen before,” they said.

Australian tourist Lincoln Thompson described the botanical garden as “perfectly done”.



The Canopy Walk at KL Forest Eco Park.

“The park is clean and there are a lot of interesting things to see here,” he said.

Safeguarding city parks

There is still room for improvements for parks in Kuala Lumpur in terms of environmental sustainability and management, said Dr Ahmad Nazrin Aris Anuar who is a senior lecturer of park and amenity management at Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM).

“Urban development pressures pose significant threats to green spaces.

“As such, there is a need for stronger measures to protect these areas from encroachment and environmental degradation.

“Hence, implementing policies to safeguard parks from urban encroachment is crucial.

“These include stricter zoning laws, community-led conservation projects and educational

campaigns about the importance of green spaces,” Ahmad Nazrin said in a media statement issued jointly with two other lecturers from the department, Dr Rabiatul Adawiyah Nasir and Dr Che Bon Ahmad.

The statement noted that the parks lacked qualified personnel in park and amenities management, and a multifaceted approach should be taken to address this challenge.

“Efforts to attract and retain qualified personnel in park management should include promoting park management as a viable career pathway.

“Highlighting the intrinsic rewards, societal benefits and career advancement opportunities associated with park management can encourage individuals to pursue education and training in this field.

“By investing in the development of qualified professionals,



‘Picnic in the Park’ at KLCC Park, which was held for the second time, has won an award.



Community events

KLCC Park was the venue of the “Picnic in The Park” event that was held over two consecutive weekends, from June 15 to 16 and June 22 to 23.

Visitors enjoyed their food amid breathtaking views of PETRONAS Twin Towers and KLCC Lake Symphony.

Tents and picnic tables were set up in the park.

Suria KLCC public relations and communications manager Sherina Khairi said this event won the Best Experiential Marketing award in the Malaysia Shopping Malls Association (PPKM) Awards last year.

“A lot of tourists came to enjoy some quality time with their loved ones,” she said.

She added that events like this could contribute positively to the economy by encouraging tourists to lengthen their stay in the city.

Investor Alham Alhamti, from Yemen, said her children had always wanted to have a picnic in KLCC Park.

“They love the atmosphere, especially the tent set-up.

“It is also quite an interesting concept to have a picnic in the city centre,” said Alhamti, who was there with her family to celebrate her daughter’s seventh birthday.

For housewife Nikki Ong, the event gave her family a brand new experience as this was their son’s first picnic.

“Who wouldn’t want to picnic in the city centre, facing KLCC?” said Ong, who was there with her son and Italian husband.



Abundant natural greenery is a pull factor for visitors to Kuala Lumpur.

we can enhance the sustainability, conservation efforts and visitor experiences within parks and recreational areas.”

The lecturers suggested holding more events in city parks to

attract tourists.

“However, while these special events aim to increase tourist numbers, they should prioritise local community involvement,” they added.

