

Bukit Jalil park ruined by rubbish

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Visitors ignoring signs prohibiting feeding of wildlife, littering

PILES of rubbish are being left behind at the Bukit Jalil Recreational Park in Kuala Lumpur by visitors who come during weekend and public holidays.

Many parkgoers, including families with small children can be seen throwing rubbish into the lake.

They are also fond of feeding bread to pigeons, monkeys and fish, oblivious to the harm that human food does to wildlife.

Nature enthusiasts are upset by visitors feeding wildlife and throwing plastic waste indiscriminately.

"It is appalling to see people feeding bread to pigeons and fish, but what made my blood boil was seeing adults showing their young children that it is okay to throw rubbish everywhere," said Uma Devi Rajamanicam, who frequents the park.

"I saw one child, after emptying the bread from its plastic bag, threw the bag into the lake while her parents clapped their hands and filmed the episode."

Uma said she approached the couple and politely told them that it was not acceptable to feed the animals nor throw rubbish into the lake.

"They seemed apologetic. I do hope they don't do it again."

Another parkgoer, Anna Wong, who lives nearby, said she was appalled to see so many people feeding the monkeys, despite signs warning against it.

"It is common knowledge that human food is not safe for mon-



Ahmad says feeding animals at the park creates secondary problems.

keys and can cause all sorts of health issues. Monkeys can also become aggressive if they start associating people with food.

"If the monkeys become dependent on people for food, they will lose their natural foraging skills," she pointed out.

Wong, a regular at the park, said she also noticed that the monkeys were becoming bolder around humans, leading to safety concerns.

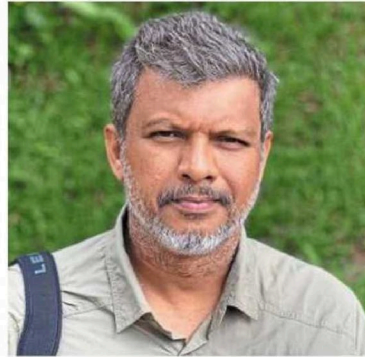
"People should stop feeding the monkeys," she stressed.

Haniza Sulaiman said she was annoyed by the indiscriminate dumping of rubbish.

"I saw many discarding their food packets on the ground after emptying them," she said.

"Some even drop their litter right next to the bin.

"I cannot understand such a lack of basic civic consciousness and lack of care for the environment," she added.



Sebastian says animals can become ill from eating human food like bread.

Ecological Association of Malaysia president Prof Dr Ahmad Ismail said feeding animals at the park would create secondary issues like dirtying the area and encouraging the animals to forage for food in rubbish bins.

"Animal-human interaction can also transmit diseases, which is why some local authorities prohibit the feeding of pigeons."

Prof Ahmad said that despite the government's campaign to discourage against single-use plastic and to promote recycling efforts, people were still throwing rubbish indiscriminately.

Ecotourism and Conservation Society Malaysia president and chief executive officer Andrew Sebastian said feeding bread to monkeys, birds and fish was detrimental to the environment and ecosystem.

"Fish are not adapted to digesting bread, which can cause bloat-



Rubbish is strewn outside garbage bins alongside dried palm fronds.

ing and other digestive issues.

"Bread lacks the nutrients that fish need to thrive on," he said, adding that bread in the water could lead to an overgrowth of harmful bacteria and fungi, which could cause diseases in fish.

Bread decomposing in water could lead to increased levels of nutrients like phosphorus and nitrogen, said Sebastian.

"This can cause algae blooms, which deplete oxygen levels in the water and harm aquatic life.

"Bread can also pollute the water," he said, urging for peer monitoring among the public.

During a visit by *StarMetro*, many people could be seen feeding the animals.

Pigeons gathered for food near the bridge built across a lake while monkeys sat on the bridge railing waiting to be fed.

Numerous empty plastic bread bags were left along the bridge. Plastic was also seen floating in the murky and dirty lake.

A Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) spokesperson said the rubbish in the park was partly caused by monkeys rummaging through the bins.

He said the bins in the park were emptied twice daily and signs prohibiting against feeding the monkeys had been installed.

"We take seriously the issue of littering and feeding the animals.

"We urge all park visitors to be more responsible," he added.