



Regardless of the weather, youths can play basketball at the new covered court along Jalan 13/32 in Jinjang Selatan. — Photos: LOW LAY PHON, LOW BOON TAT/The Star

By **JAROD LIM**  
jarodlim@thestar.com.my

# More recreational spaces for KL

Within six years, 13 parks in Kepong and 52 in Segambut have been upgraded and repaired

AS KUALA Lumpur's development accelerates, the importance of parks as essential recreational spaces becomes increasingly evident.

These green havens play a pivotal role in enhancing the urban community's physical and mental well-being.

Recognising this, representatives from the Kepong and Segambut constituencies have been proactive in upgrading park facilities and landscaping to ensure these urban oases are well-maintained and accessible to all.

Numerous projects have been carried out on existing parks and in creating new spaces with funding from the government and local authorities.

These efforts include utilising vacant spaces, repairing playground equipment and courts, and constructing new facilities.

## Improving green spaces

The most recent development is the transformation of a plot of vacant land at Jalan Vista Mutiara, Kepong Baru, into a pocket park.

This is the first pocket park in Kepong that has been completed through vacant land rejuvenation.

Residents in the vicinity are delighted by the transformation of the land that was previously used as a food court.

The pocket park, located adjacent to Vista Mutiara Condominium, now serves as a recreational space.

Condominium Residents Association chairman Ng Shei Kwee said, "After the food operators moved out, the land became a breeding ground for mosquitoes, and there was at least one dengue case per month among the condominium residents.

"There were even snakes sighted on the vacant land.

"Now the pocket park serves as a green space for leisure, benefitting the residents here."



The reflexology path also has been upgraded at the Jalan Api-Api playground in Kepong.

The pocket park, known as Taman Laman Jalanan Hijau, is a prime example of a green space rejuvenation project aimed at providing the much-needed recreational areas that urban residents crave.

It also doubles up as a safe, scenic route for commuters to access the Kepong Baru MRT station instead of walking by the road.

Kepong MP Lim Lip Eng has been advocating for more functional recreational spaces for city residents, promoting community well-being, fostering social interaction and providing opportuni-

ties for outdoor activities.

However, after being elected, he discovered that there were many neglected neighbourhood parks in the constituency.

"These parks are of different sizes and some of them are in bad shape.

"We also found unkempt vacant land that gradually became mosquito-breeding grounds."

A good example of this is the plot that has now been transformed into the Taman Laman Jalanan Hijau pocket park.

"If the residents near these vacant lots wish for a park, we

can work together and submit an application to Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) or other government agencies," he said.

Lim said he hoped that by focusing on increasing green spaces in the constituency, it would encourage more city folk to lead active lifestyles.

"In order to get communities to come out from their homes, we must properly equip these green areas with functional facilities, shady trees and benches for recreational purposes," he said.

"Kepong is a mature constituency but it is also an ageing township with a sizeable senior population.

"We hope to provide more leisure spaces for people to hang out with their friends and families, instead of their spending time at coffeeshops.

"For youths, we also strive to provide more sporting facilities such as the covered basketball court at Pak Thian Kiong Temple on Jalan Jambu Berasa 2."

Since 2018, Lim's office has completed 13 park upgrades and green space rejuvenation projects in Kepong.

Among the parks being upgraded this year are neighbourhood parks at Jalan 13/32 Jinjang Selatan; Jalan Chiak Padang, Kepong Baru; Jalan Api-Api; Jalan 2/3, Taman Kepong; Jalan Jinjang 3/32 and Taman Laman Jalanan Hijau.

According to Lim, most public park upgrades and the creation of pocket parks were funded by DBKL.

"We also applied for other grants from various depart-



The park at Jalan Dutamas Seroja 2, Taman Segambut SPPK, has new facilities.

ments, including the Prime Minister's Department's Implementation Coordination Unit (ICU), Housing and Local Government Ministry as well as Youth and Sports Ministry to enhance recreational facilities in the area.

"ICU has an allocation of RM2mil a year for community projects for the constituencies," he said.

Recently, the Kepong MP's office also transformed vacant land along Jalan Silang into a pocket park – the second to be completed in Kepong.

Lim's aide Dic Lai said the open space directly opposite the MP's service centre on Jalan Prima 1, Metro Prima, had been upgraded.

It is one of the projects completed under Kepong MP's allocation through the ICU funding.

"Four solar street lamps, two gazebos, outdoor fitness equipment and play facilities such as swings and seesaws were added to that space. The project cost RM150,000.

"It was officially completed and handed over to City Hall last August," he said.

Last year, there were approxi-

mately eight green lung areas that were upgraded with funding sourced from DBKL and ICU with amounts ranging from RM50,000 to RM500,000, according to Lai.

"Additionally, we recently completed the upgrade of a field in Jinjang Utara at a cost of RM200,000 to provide residents with a well-equipped recreational space.

"It now has basic outdoor exercise equipment and lighting," he said.

Lim is also considering the construction of an indoor sports complex.

"Kepong does not have a public sports complex and this will be the long-term goal for the constituency.

"We have suggested two areas for the sports complex on land that's about 1.21ha. This is still at a discussion stage.

"We have written to the relevant parties, including DBKL, the Youth and Sports Ministry and Federal Territories Department, requesting a grant of RM5mil.

"Our hopes are that the complex would be built, up to a few storeys with facilities such as a

swimming pool, football pitch, (running) track and auditorium."

## Enhancing parks

Meanwhile, in Segambut, 52 parks have been upgraded over the past six years.

Segambut MP Hannah Yeoh's political secretary Yap Yee Vonne said park upgrades had been prioritised to address facilities that were in disrepair.

"According to DBKL, there are approximately 80 parks in the Segambut constituency, of which we have successfully upgraded 52 parks.

"The work includes repairing courts, building jogging tracks, installing outdoor gym sets, replacing playground equipment, etc," she said.

Yap added that currently, the primary focus was on upgrading existing parks rather than creating new ones.

"Given the high number of parks in the constituency, we took a phased approach to the upgrades — updating jogging tracks and gym equipment one year, and playgrounds the next.

"This phased approach allows



Residents in Taman Sri Segambut have a new futsal court at the park.



A refurbished playground at Taman Tun Dr Ismail.

us to maximise impact, covering a larger number of parks each year.

"In addition, we also gazetted Taman Persekutuan Bukit Kiara as a Federal Park in 2020."

Among those getting new facilities are the parks at Jalan Udang Galah 1, Taman Sri Segambut; Jalan Dutamas Seroja 2, Taman SPPK; as well as Jalan Medan Athinahappan 1, Taman Tun Dr Ismail.

Yap said when Yeoh took office in 2018, she had access to government allocation and continued the efforts of her predecessor, Lim Lip Eng, to assess each

park's needs.

"It led to a series of upgrades aimed at restoring community spaces for residents' enjoyment and well-being.

"Unlike other areas, Kuala Lumpur does not have local councillors or state assemblymen, making it essential for our office to address these local issues.

"We emphasise community engagement before upgrading any park, ensuring that we understand the local residents' needs and preferences, to make upgrades truly beneficial for the community," she said.