

Ruination of Commonwealth Hill

► Residents and visitors lament state of desolation at former iconic park in Bukit Jalil

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PETALING JAYA: The deteriorating condition of Commonwealth Hill at Bukit Jalil in Kuala Lumpur has raised concerns among locals and visitors, who question the lack of maintenance and "disgraceful" state of disrepair.

Commonwealth Hill was developed as part of the Bukit Jalil National Sports Complex, the venue for the 1998 Commonwealth Games. The park is located across the road from the Bukit Jalil National Stadium and is connected to it via a walkway.

Checks by *theSun* found overflowing rubbish bins and litter scattered across pathways, while stagnant water in several areas had become breeding grounds for mosquitoes.

Commemorative structures built to honour the 1998 Commonwealth Games are in a state of disrepair, with broken plaques and monuments, and other structures defaced with graffiti.

Overgrown weeds have overwhelmed much of the park, while several uprooted trees have damaged park benches.

A jogger, who asked to be known

only as Jay, 44, said poor maintenance has been a serious problem even before the Covid-19 pandemic.

"I've been coming here for quite some time, and I've not seen any improvements. The condition of the park seems to be getting worse with time.

"Despite its poor condition, the park still attracts visitors, mostly locals like myself, because of its easy access. It's such a shame because the place is close to public transport and easily accessible. It had so much potential, but it's been left to rot."

Retiree Chew Thiam Ho, 75, reminisced about the park's former glory, describing it as one of the best in the area when it first opened.

"I've been coming to Commonwealth Hill since it opened to the public in 1998. I live in Sri

Petaling, so it's very close. I could just walk to the park from my house.

"The park used to be very well-maintained, and facilities were excellent. There were even metal plaques with information about the Commonwealth countries. But now many of them are either broken or have been stolen.

"It used to be so beautiful here with fountains, a pond, well-trimmed trees and neatly maintained bushes."

On Oct 28, 2015, Malaysian Resources Corporation Berhad (MRCB), through its subsidiary Rukun Juang Sdn Bhd, was appointed by the government to turn the Bukit Jalil National Sports Complex into the Kuala Lumpur Sports City in time for the 2017 Southeast Asian (SEA) Games.

Chew lauded the transformation but questioned why nothing had

been done for Commonwealth Hill.

"Kuala Lumpur Sports City has undergone a remarkable transformation, and the surrounding infrastructure is beautiful.

"I don't understand why nothing has been done for Commonwealth Hill. It looks so out of place and neglected among the regenerated facilities."

He said the park is an iconic site that commemorates Malaysia hosting the Commonwealth Games, adding that it was a shame to see it in such a "disgraceful and deplorable state".

theSun also noticed signage at the park bearing the name of Malaysia Stadium Corporation (MSC), and reached out to City Hall, MRCB and MSC for clarification and updates about the fate of the park, but did not receive any response at press time.