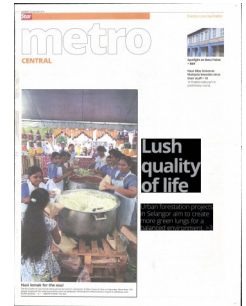


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Lush quality of life

Urban forestation projects in Selangor aim to create more green lungs for a balanced environment. >3

RM40mil urban forest in Shah Alam

Putra Heights in Subang Jaya also to have its own recreational park

By **EDWARD RAJENDRA** and
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URBAN forests connect us to nature, providing a balance between development and environment conservation.

City folk will be glad to see more and more parts of the Klang Valley getting a green makeover in the form of urban forests and lush recreational parks.

The latest additions are a 16.3ha urban forest in Shah Alam and a 3.23ha recreational park in Subang Jaya.

Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mohamed Azmin Ali said the state had gazetted the land in

Section 13, Shah Alam, for the urban forest.

“Discussions have begun to bring in the right people with the know-how on urban forestation.

“Allocations to finance the project have been given under the 2015 and 2016 Budget. We envisage a forest in three years from now.

“People will be spending time to relax, having a picnic with their families or just enjoying the shade under the canopy of trees,” Azmin said after launching Aeon Co (M) Berhad’s Hometown Forest

Programme in Shah Alam.

He said the gazetted land was a short distance from the Raja Tun Uda Library in Jalan Kelab Golf 13/6.

The Selangor government has allocated RM40mil for the project, which will be carried out in phases.

Also at the event was Tourism, Environment, Green Technology and Consumerism Committee chairman Elizabeth Wong, who said the forest would be known as People’s Park.

“Challenges such as develop-

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ment and changing climate patterns make it more important for us to move towards environment conservation," she said.

Azmin said Selangor must have 30% of forested area at all times.

Selangor now has 33% forested area and the state government plans to increase its urban tree canopy.

"Trees will help enhance the quality of our lives as from an annual measurement, 100 trees can remove two tonnes of carbon dioxide from the air," the Mentri Besar elaborated.

Earlier at Shah Alam's Aeon Mall, about 850 volunteers gave their time and energy in planting trees.

Aeon Hometown Forest Programme will see 13,000 trees and shrubs being planted and also given out to people to green Shah Alam city.

Aeon Co (M) Berhad managing director Nur Qamarina Chew said as a responsible corporate citizen, Aeon would contribute its resources to preserving the eco-system wherever its stores or malls were situated.

In Malaysia, Aeon has planted some 500,000 trees and shrubs.

Nur Qamarina said there was an urgent need to create awareness to green and preserve the planet for future generations.

Aeon Co (M) Berhad chairman Datuk Abdullah Mohd Yusof together with Nur Qamarina, Azmin, Kota Anggerik assemblyman Dr Yaakob Sapari, state health, welfare, women and family affairs Dr Daroyah Alwi, Aeon Asia Sdn Bhd managing director Shinobu Washizawa together with

school students joined in to plant trees and shrubs around the Aeon Mall.

Forest Research Institute of Malaysia (FRIM) eco-physiology head and senior research officer Dr Ang Lai Hoe who gave a briefing on the right methods of planting trees, said FRIM was committed to share knowledge on creating urban forest and help people better understand the need for an ecosystem of trees within neighbourhoods.

"Urban forest provides neighbourhoods with environmental and social benefits," he said.

In Putra Heights, Subang Jaya, residents welcome a new development that will give residents its own green lung.

The recreational park is now under way thanks to Sime Darby Property Berhad, B&G Property Sdn Bhd and Malaysian Institute of Planners (MIP).

Its groundbreaking ceremony took place on Saturday at The Glades, officiated by Subang Jaya Municipal Council (MPSJ) president Datuk Nor Hisham Ahmad Dahlan.

The ceremony was organised in conjunction with World City Planning Day 2015-2016, and is seen as a step towards helping MPSJ fulfil its MPSJ Green City Action Plan 2030.

The park will have numerous types of tropical plants selected by the local council, giving visitors a cool and refreshing environment.

There will be a 5km jogging and cycling track, 4.5km tactile walkways for the disabled, 13 pedestrian and cyclist stations, eight shaded areas, a 600sqm play area, two playing courts and a

2,000sqm open lawn. Among the other facilities are 32 parking bays, 15 motorcycle bays and public toilets.

Sime Darby Property managing director Datuk Jauhari Hamidi said the recreational park would provide added value to residents in Putra

Heights and surrounding areas

"The park with its many recreational facilities will foster a healthy lifestyle," he noted.

Nor Hisham said a recreational park was listed in the "Wishlist Green City 2030" that was drawn up through dialogue engagements with the public.

He said creating green lungs in Subang Jaya would help improve the well-being of the community, and the efforts should not rest solely on one group.

"We need more commitment from all parties in enabling us to make our action plan a reality.

"We hope that developers, government agencies, non-government organisations and even the community will step forward to ensure that we can turn Subang Jaya into a green city by 2030," he added.

A memorandum of understanding was signed between MPSJ and MIP after the groundbreaking ceremony, to coordinate, implement and monitor activities related to the Low-Carbon City framework.

The day also saw activities for the community such as colouring contest for children and a 25km Green Ride around Putra Heights for the public.

Police officers from Subang Jaya also took time off to join the community event.



The recreational park at Persiaran Putra Perdana will have a 44m open lawn for public use when completed.

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Volunteers planting trees around Aeon Mall in Shah Alam.



Nor Hisham (left) and Jauhari (second from left) planting a tree at Persiaran Putra Perdana, Putra Heights, which will be turned into a recreational park for the public. — Photos by RICKY LAI and IZZRAFIQ ALIAS/ The Star