

Headline	Bamboo forest future attraction in Putrajaya		
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Bamboo forest future attraction in Putrajaya

Plans to have at least 600 species of plant from various parts of the world

Story and photos by JADE CHAN
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PUTRAJAYA will soon have its own tropical bamboo forest or "bambusetum" located in Taman Botani, Precinct 1, within the administrative capital.

"The garden will occupy a 10 to 12ha site and is expected to be fully completed within three years," said Putrajaya Corporation (PPj) president Datuk Seri Hasim Ismail.

"While Malaysia has about 70 species of bamboo (from peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak), we hope to have about half the estimated 1,200 bamboo species worldwide in this garden."

"I hope the *bambusetum* will be a thriving garden and will be ready to host the International Conference on Bamboo within the next five years," Hasim said during the pre-launch of the *bambusetum* organised by PPj and the Malaysian Bamboo Society (MBS).

Present at the event were MBS president and Serom assemblyman Datuk Abdul Razak Minhat, Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) director-general Datuk Dr Abd Latif Mohmod, Malaysian Timber Industry Board representative Mahpar Atan, and PPj Landscape and Park vice-president

Baharuddin Aziz.

They also planted several bamboo plants of the *semantan*, *madu*, *aur*, *hitam* and *betung* variety as a symbolic gesture of the event.

"The *bambusetum* is PPj's initiative towards establishing a bamboo forest in the city. It is also our vision of making Putrajaya a sustainable city by 2020 and beyond," said Hasim.

"We hope to add the bamboo forest to Putrajaya's list of tourist attractions. There are 10 existing public parks in Putrajaya, including Taman Botani, with three more parks in the pipeline."

He added that there would also be a bamboo gallery at Taman Botani's visitor information centre, which will serve as a place to display, research, promote and market bamboo-related products.

Hasim noted that bamboo is acknowledged as a sustainable building material and a product of great commercial value, in addition to being an important element in creating a balance between oxygen and carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

Dr Abd Latif added that tropical bamboo is reputed to be the best in terms of strength and durability, but more research needed to be done in terms of the best harvesting methods.

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Hasim and PPj Landscape and Park vice-president Baharuddin Aziz (second from right) taking a closer look at some of the edible plants and herbs available at Taman Botani in Precinct 1, Putrajaya.



Hasim planting 'buluh payung' at the bambusetum, which is expected to be completed within three years.