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A stroll in the park does wonders

By DR KANNAN PASAMANICKAM

WHEN I was on prolonged medical leave recently, I took the opportunity to explore the parks in the Klang Valley. Some, my wife and I had been to in the past; but, though we have lived in Petaling Jaya for more than 30 years, we were unaware of the presence of the other parks. Below is a review of six of my favourite ones.

Denai Alam Lake, Shah Alam

Tasik Denai Alam fronts the Denai Alam township. The lake is moderate in size and has a lot of lotus plants and flowers. Well paved walking/jogging paths surround the lake. Visitors can climb a tall wooden lookout that has been constructed near the lake for a view of the surroundings.

Shah Alam National Botanical Park

The facilities and cleanliness of the park are impressive. You can walk or cycle along the wide paved roads. Motorised bicycles are available for rental at RM40 per hour. In some places, the incline is quite steep.

No mosquitoes in spite of the vegetation. The trees and ferns are beautiful.

We saw road signs indicating the presence of porcupines but did not see any. A small horse farm is present in one corner of the park but we were not sure whether horses were available for hire to ride. A canteen there serves various Malaysian dishes and refreshments.

Kepong Metropolitan Lake Garden, KL

This beautiful park is part of the Forest Research Institute of Malaysia. Many trees, flowering plants and shrubs surround the large central lake.

Well paved walking and cycling tracks surround the lake; these are generally quite flat but in some areas are moderately steep.

An observation tower provides good views of the surroundings. One can see the Petronas Twin Towers and the KL Tower in the distance.

The pond teems with fishes, and angling is allowed. We saw at least one bird swooping into the lake and making off with a fish!



A section of the lotus pond at Perdana Botanical Gardens.

This park is also a favourite with kite enthusiasts.

Permaisuri Lake Garden, KL

This beautiful recreational park is situated near Cheras. There is a huge lake in the centre of the park and a large wooden platform extends into the lake near the entrance to the park – this is a favourite place for people to do their tai chi and yoga exercises.

A broad, well paved, flat walking/jogging track surrounds the park. For those who want more vigorous exercise, there are trails leading up to the adjacent hill; in some places, the slope is very steep.

A flock of storks have made the lake their home and I was surprised that they could fly right up and sit on the tall trees that surround the lake.

Perdana Botanical Gardens (aka Lake Gardens / Perdana Lake Gardens), KL

This is one of the oldest and most popular parks in Kuala Lumpur. It is situated in the heart of the city, in a heritage part of Kuala Lumpur. Commissioned in 1888, it is the brainchild of Alfred Venning who was the British State Treasurer.

This lovely park with its well laid out walking and cycling paths, bordered by many trees and plants, also includes a large deer park. Most of the walking paths are flat but some adjacent to the deer park are very steep and

may be slippery after the rain.

A large lake, a central feature of the park, was created by damming the Sungai Bras Bras. The lake teems with various types of fish and a family of resident ducks, and has several fountains. Visitors, especially children, have a great time feeding the voracious fish which swarm to the surface when bread is thrown into the lake.

At night, the park grounds and its trees are beautifully lit up by multi-coloured spotlights.

Taman Tugu and the Kuala Lumpur Bird Park are nearby.

The park is open from 7am to 8pm daily.

Taman Jaya Lake, Petaling Jaya

We have been going to Taman Jaya as a family to exercise for over 40 years as it is near our home.

The grounds are well kept but, unfortunately, the large pond smells bad. It is, however, popular with anglers. I think the type of fish commonly caught here is the *ikan sepat* (gourami).

The park was recently upgraded. New plants, including a bamboo grove, have been planted.

The walking paths are flat throughout, easy for senior citizens to negotiate. There is also a nice, winding, paved cycling path shaded by huge trees.

A large concrete stage has been built jutting into the pond – this is popular with those who practise qigong and yoga. The children's playground is well maintained, and all the equipment is new and safe.

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Sunrise at Denai Alam Lake. — Photos: DR KANNAN PASAMANICKAM