



TRAFFIC MATTERS

- There will be daily lane closures along Jalan Kepong (Sungai Buloh-bound and Jinjang-bound) in front of Aeon Mall Kepong, until April 28, from 11pm to 6am, intermittently. This is to facilitate demolition of the pedestrian bridge as part of MRT construction works.
- There will be a continuation of the two-lane closure from KM14 to KM16 as well as slip road closures of Exit 702 and Exit 703 on both directions of the Cheras-Kajang Highway until April 30 from 10pm to 5am. The slip road closures will not be carried out simultaneously.
- Lane closures along Jalan Kepong (Jinjang bound) at Desa Jaya and Pekan Lama Kepong will take place until May 13, from 11pm to 6am intermittently. This includes a slow lane closure after the Desa Jaya Food Court for a stretch of 400m. In addition, the left lane along Jalan Kepong (Jinjang-bound) will be closed for a stretch of 400m from Balai Polis Kepong towards Metro Perdana, while there will be a right-lane closure on both Sungai Buloh and Jinjang bound sides for 200m, from the Jalan Metro Perdana traffic light.
- Right-lane closures have been implemented along Lebuhraya Pintasan Dengkil/Persimpangan Putrajaya Sentral until April 23, from 7am to 7pm and 8pm to 6am daily to facilitate MRT construction works for the upcoming Sungai Buloh-Serdang-Putrajaya line. For details, call 03-7494 2222.
- There will be a continuation of night lane closures in stages along Jalan Jinjang Permai 3 (nearby Wisma TNB Kepong) and Jalan Kepong (Kepong-bound and KL-bound) until May 15, from 10pm to 6am intermittently. This is to facilitate utilities relocation and any other related activities for MRT construction works.

TALK ON MANAGING CANCER

There will be a free talk on "Balancing Immunity - A New Dimension In Managing Cancer" at Block 5 and 7, Level 10, The Boulevard Mid Valley City, KL on April 26 from 8pm to 9.30pm. The talk will be conducted by two cancer survivors on how to overcome cancer and remain a "long-term cancer survivor". To register, please SMS your name and email address to 016-608 6083 or 012-209 0437.

MENTAL HEALTH

Malaysian Mental Health Association (MMHA) will have a Family Link Programme throughout May to help Mandarin-speaking caregivers understand better about our loved ones' mental health condition. The programme is free. For details, call 03-77825499 or email to admin@mmha.org.my.

QIGONG CLASS

A one-and-a-half day free Chinese Medicine Qigong Class will be held at Sri Lankan Buddhist Temple Lot 85, Jalan Sentul, Kuala Lumpur on April 29 and 30. The class is conducted in English by a qualified instructor and features easy and simple practice for the busy modern lifestyle. For details, call 012-420 6069 or 017-669 0320.

FREE EYE SCREENING

In collaboration with One Sight Foundation, The Rotary International District 3300 Action Group on Blindness Prevention and Lions International will dispense 3,000 pairs of spectacles to needy Malaysian adults and children. Eye screening will be carried out at the Petaling Jaya Hockey Stadium on April 23 from 8.30am to noon. Only those who are in need of spectacles during the free eye screening procedure will be shortlisted and referred to the Tun Hussein Onn National Eye Hospital. For details, call 012-267 2799 (Dr Hari Yanasakaran), 016-276 7123 (V Thillainathan) or 012-239 9588 (Chow Chee Ping).



KLCC Park is popular among shoppers and office workers who wish to take a break amid its cooling greenery.

On the Taman Tugu project, Dr Osman said Iam strongly supported it and was discussing with Khazanah Nasional to be part of the development team.

"It is high time Malaysia has its own 'Central Park'.

"Having a park in the city will allow people to enjoy the greenery and be able to relate to the culture and soul of the city," he said.

From beautification touch-ups to seamless integration, Dr Osman noted that the trends in landscape development had greatly changed over the decades.

"Thirty to 40 years ago, landscape architecture used to be seen as a measure to provide a more pleasing look to development projects and were implemented at the end stage. "It has since evolved whereby it is integrated and incorporated into the planning stages of a development," he said, citing Putrajaya's intelligent garden city concept as an example.

"These days, landscape architecture can even be used to solve certain issues if planned early.

"For example, the issue of storm-water management and water runoff can be addressed by integrating them with a river corridor or retention pond that has been landscaped into a public park.

"That way, the park is both functional and pleasing," said Dr Osman in an interview held ahead of the Malaysia Landscape Architecture Awards.

The annual event recognises quality landscape architecture work and projects by people in the industry, including developers, contractors, researchers and students.

The ceremony will be held this weekend to coincide with World Landscape Architecture Month. Iam will also launch the Landscape Architect Agenda (LAA) 2050 then. "It is projected that 30 years from now, 90% of the country's population will be living in cities.

"This will result in greater demand for housing, and landscaping will be a factor to consider when buying a property.

"Landscaping needs to be seen as something that inspires our living and increases our quality of life," said Dr Osman, adding that landscaping covered both horizontal and vertical concepts.

Iam will invite industry players, policymakers and related stakeholders to give their input for LAA 2050,



Dr Osman says it is high time that Malaysia has its own Central Park.

which will serve as the master plan for landscape architecture in Malaysia for the next 30 years.

This will culminate with the Landscape Architect Summit to be held in Malaysia in 2020, in which over 60 countries under the International Federation of Landscape Architects will be represented. Ten strategic areas have been outlined in LAA 2050.

"We need to look into policies and certain legislations for landscape development and green space. We also need to integrate new ideas, research and technology in order to move forward," added Dr Osman, who is also the dean of Universiti Putra Malaysia's Faculty of Design and Architecture.

Topics outlined in LAA 2050 include urban farming to address food security issues, parks and gardens as green connectors to link to other spaces, as well as landscaping as something that inspires living and connects to memories and heritage.

"The agenda will feature local content with an international outlook. Once it's in place, the curriculum for landscape architecture will be changed.

"We want to encourage more innovation and critical thinking, and provide a better quality and more comprehensive solutions.

"It is no longer about designing with drawing boards, but seeing landscape architecture as a bigger picture," concluded Dr Osman.



KLCC Park is an example of a little oasis in the middle of the city.



Landscaping covers both horizontal and vertical concepts. With the lack of space, the trend has moved towards rooftop gardens and vertical green walls.



An artist's impression of the planned Taman Tugu. - filepic

Green spaces that inspire

Parks are now centrally located to enable city folk to get a respite from work

By **JADE CHAN**
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WHAT do Hyde Park in London, Central Park in New York, and Hyde Park in Sydney have in common?

They are like little oases in the middle of the city; a space where city folk can get respite from the stress of work, enjoy some recreation and even derive inspiration. People use the parks during and

after office hours to have a meal, exercise, or do their work in an outdoor setting.

Some walk across the park to get to the other side of the city.

The role of public parks have changed somewhat over the past few decades.

From being a thing of beauty and recreation, parks now are integrated into the development of an area.

Kuala Lumpur has two such

parks located in the city centre - KLCC Park and Taman Tugu park which is still under planning stages.

Institute of Landscape Architects Malaysia (Iam) president Assoc Prof Dr Osman Mohd Tahir said parks were no longer located in corners of a city but centrally located and served as connectors to other areas.

"They are designed to attract people to gather and enjoy the greenery

and fresh air.

"They also create an environment for people to relax and get inspiration," said Dr Osman.

"This has been known to have a therapeutic effect, which leads to better efficiency in daily life.

"It is also a boost for the green economy as parks are usually linked to an increase in the value of a property and its surrounding area."