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`Nature' camp fun for 500 children

FOR the parents who dropped off their children to attend the recent three-day "Petronas Family Camping Carnival 2003", it meant free time for them during the weekend.

For the 500 children, it was sheer excitement.

This was apparent during the opening ceremony where the children turned up in full force, all ready to enjoy the activities planned for them.

Launched by Petronita president Puan Sri Noraini Mohd Yusoff, the carnival is an annual event.

Petronita is the association for wives of employees and female employees of Petronas.

This year, for the first time, the camp was held at Taman Wetland and Taman Botani in Putrajaya.

It was organised by Petronas sports and recreation club.

"The carnival was previously held with the co-operation of the Armed Forces and the police," said Petronas sports and recreation club president Dr Hamzah Abdul Hamid .

"This year, the committee decided to hold it in Putrajaya because of its healthy environment.

"We also want the children to learn something new."

Taman Wetland public relations and communications and special events officer Junaida Abdullah said throughout the three days, the children took part in outdoor activities such as abseiling, compass orienteering and guided tour.

"The junior and senior group were involved in different activities."

These activities included synchronised paddle boats, games like magic paper and find the solution, science show, craft-and-colouring activity and sing-along.

Hamzah said the activities were aimed to expose the children to a series of self-development skills.

"All campers will also be signed up as members of the Rakan Botani programme launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is the programme's first member," he said.

"I am confident that after the camp, the children will have learnt some basic survival skills as well as about leadership and teamwork."