

THE FOREST OF KUALA LUMPUR

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May 06, 2011

By Dr. Mahathir Mohamad

1. It is great to watch Kuala Lumpur grow. We see everywhere the cranes marking the sites of new development. There are skyscrapers in every corner, great skyscrapers of fantastic shapes and heights. Kuala Lumpur now looks like other great cities of the world.

2. But if you look again you will see that it is still quite green, greener than most other cities. New landscaping with mature trees have contributed towards this greenness.

3. But there are here and there patches of forests, as dense as the well-known tropical forests of Malaysia. They are thick with undergrowth which make them as impenetrable. The trees are tall and so leafy that they cut off all the light of the sun in the day time. You cannot see through these miniature forests and I think you cannot walk through them either.

4. They make Kuala Lumpur truly green and at times you feel as if you are driving through a forest. How wonderful to be able to drive through forests right in the middle of the city. Then you emerge to see the towers of the skyscrapers, the shopping complexes and the manicured streets once again.

5. The experience is unique and it is characteristic of Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia.

6. Sadly I have seen these forest patches disappearing one after another to be replaced with hard concrete and granite towers of development. I fear in time, in not too long a time, the forests will all disappear. Their green will no longer colour Kuala Lumpur. They will no longer give shade to passers-by. The sunlight will be hard and hot, bouncing off tarred streets and concrete pavements and heating up the air above.

7. We need to develop. But we need to care also for the environment. The patches of forests of Kuala Lumpur are unique. We should try to preserve them even if it will cost us a lot of money.

28 Comments

S.Deen

May 6, 2011 at 12:42 pm

I thought we are busy talking about "green" on everything nowadays more than ever. It will be very surprising if our government doesnt have any policies or guidelines imposed to protect the environment!!!!!!

Hajar

May 6, 2011 at 2:44 pm

Dearest YAB Tun,
AGREE with Tun â Green KL, Green Environment, Green Technology, Green

Computing/Green IT, etcâ ;

Thanks Tun.

**** May Allah SWT bless Tun & family ****

• *Rimba Emas*

May 6, 2011 at 4:37 pm

RIMBA EMAS UCAPKAN SALAM BUAT TUN BERDUA MOGA DIRAHMATI ALLAH S.W.T.

1) BETUL TUN KALAU KITA PERHATIKAN BETUL-BETUL KEJADIAN BUMI INI YANG DI JADIKAN ALLAH S.W.T MELIPUTI BERBAGAI BENTUK MUKA BUMI.

2) KAWASAN YANG PANAS SELALUNYA KITA DAPATI MUKA BUMINYA KERING KONTANG DAN TIADA TUMBUH-TUMBUHAN.

3) KITA SEBENARNYA TIADA MASAALAH KERANA BUMI KITA SENTIASA DITIMPA HUJAN YANG AKAN MENYUBURKAN TUMBUH-TUMBUHAN.

4) HANYA YANG PERLU IALAH MENJAGA ATAU MEMBENTUK RUPA ATAU JENIS TUMBUHAN YANG KITA MAHUKAN DI KAWASAN-KAWASAN TERSEBUT.

5) KAWASAN YANG TIDAK TERJAGA BERTAHUN-TAHUN PASTI AKAN MEMBENTUK KAWASAN ITU DENGAN SEMAK SAMUN DAN JIKA ADA POKOK-POKOK BESAR AKAN MENJADI HUTAN BELUKAR YANG TEBAL.

6) KUALA LUMPUR MEMERLUKAN TANAMAN UNTUK MEMBEKALKAN 'OKSIGEN' ATAU PERLUKAN PEMBEKALAN 'OKSIGEN' DARI SUMBER LAIN DAN KERAJAAN PERLU MEMASTIKAN PROSES MENGELUARKAN SUMBER INI PADA HARGA YANG MURAH. TUMBUH TUMBUHANLAH KURNIAN ALLAH S.W.T MEMBEKAL 'OKSIGEN' SECARA PERCUMA KEPADA UMAT MANUSIA.

7) KERUGIAN KOS PENYELENGGARAAN TIDAK BOLEH BERKIRA KERANA MEMIKIRKAN FAEDAH 'OKSIGEN' YANG DAPAT MEMBEKAL RAKYAT UDARA BERSIH UNTUK TERUS HIDUP DI DUNIA INI. 😊 TIADA SALAH BANGUNAN PENCAKAR LANGIT TETAPI PASTIKAN ADA PUNCA OKSIGEN DIBEKALKAN DAN SEMESTINYA TIDAK DIJADIKAN JUAL BELI SEBAGAIMANA KURNIAN ALLAH S.W.T DARI TUMBUH-TUMBUHAN.

WALLAHU'ALAM

• *owlz*

May 6, 2011 at 4:42 pm

Assalamualaikum Tun.

Kuala Lumpur forest patches disappearing one after another, and after ten to twenty years the forests will all disappear... No more green in Kuala Lumpur but only grey. Grey, grey and grey like the stone city. What a boring and its not beautiful... If Kuala Lumpur is dirty, without forest is going to make it much worst and disaster. I call that as ugly city... Air pollution is going to bring on the chemicals, particulate matter, or biological materials that cause harm or discomfort to humans or other living organisms, or cause damage to the natural environment or built environment, into the atmosphere...

Human will sick and die by this... Our species is going to be in danger. Imagine without forest, what sulfur oxides, nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) and aalll of other materials in the air can kill us, slowly, dying and murdering us in suffer. Aahhh!!! Dont care about our highly-paid salary ministers... Our "kementerian" (ministry) are just a bunch of clowns (idiot?) who do not understand what is a carbon, what is nitrogen, what is pollution and even a simple oxygen reaction... They do not understand science. The trees can reduce air

pollution.

Trees can help to settle out, trap and hold particle pollutants (dust, ash, pollen and smoke) that can damage human lungs... Trees can absorb carbon dioxide (CO2) and other dangerous gasses and, in turn, bring on the atmosphere with oxygen. It is a simple science. And to be a minister or director in government related to environment they have to understand this... Or, they are just going to waste a hard-earned rakyat tax payers money, our money that pay their salary.

Instead of understand this, they do other ugly things like corruption, under-table agreement, cheating the government contract into their pockets, no transparency, dishonesty and others... So I hope we can make Malaysia as a better place...

- Mohammad Shafiq, ex-University of Malaya, Department of Electrical Engineering

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owl_7soft @ yahoo . com

p/s: Salam and hie to Rimba Emas, jolly, HBT, Dr Syed Alwi Ahmad, anaconda, Gopal Raj Kumar, Adznam, parameswara 2, Nikmat, bumiborneo, andrewtay, Hazman Abu Bakar, adam danial, zainal_it, dtan, pakbelalang, krish, mgpunya, zulkiflee_Arif and others.

May Allah bless you all.

.

□ *jolly*

May 6, 2011 at 5:13 pm

Hi Tun,

I agree with Tun that we should preserve them even though it may cost us some money. Anyway, we could build new roads to pass these reserved areas to ease congestions, even though this may cost us some monkeys.

>How wonderful to be able to drive through forests right in the middle of the city.

If Tun prefers the real experience of traveling from the real jungle residential area to "suddenly appear right at the city", then perhaps the gov can build a few rail / road tunnels beneath the "quartz" mountains near the zoo so that people can stay in the jungle at the other side of the mountains. Maybe Genting is interested since it brings city folks closer to their resort.

□ *razin*

May 6, 2011 at 8:20 pm

Dear Tun,

Thank you very much for bringing up this topic. I fully agree with you on the importance of preserving the greens n forest of our city with all costs. All Malaysians must support this, those with authority must ensure that our forests in the city would not be destroyed in the name of developments. By all means preserve it, we can only appreciate and admire these beautiful forest in the city in 10 years time when most of the developments in KL fully matured. Yes, pl preserve our greens no matter what the cost like.

Thank you Tun.

□ *TuaCheng*

May 6, 2011 at 8:39 pm

Honestly, Sepang used to be very green and lushed.
Now it become a reddish dessert and a big flat concrete runway spreading for miles, waiting for planes to land.
Yet still under-utilized, we've set-up right beside LCCT.
Haiz, even then if not for Fireflyz, Subang is a White Elephant.
Over-development and over concentration in putting all concrete in one place, yet forget about other places.
Trengganu, Kelantan and Pahang remains the lush green place.
KL...even Putrajaya is concrete dessert.

□ *Hazman Abu Bakar*
May 7, 2011 at 2:51 am

Good call Tun. Some people are ruthless and doesn't care for the environment. We need green pockets in the city and lots of them so that we could have jungle tracking right in the middle of the city and such. DBKL need to play a big role on this and green activist needs to speak out. We need these forest to be preserved and we need it happened now.

□ *amin tan*
May 7, 2011 at 3:34 am

Dear Tun,
I do have similar observation as yours with regards to the Lake Garden and the forest of Kuala Lumpur. The forest does have ameliorating effect on the hot climate of Kuala Lumpur and keep the healthy balance between oxygen and carbon dioxide thus keeping its inhabitants healthy.
I admire and commend you for keeping Kuala Lumpur healthy as it is today during the tenure of your 22 years rule. You did not disturb nature and with your gargantuan courage and unstoppable dynamism, your development of Kuala Lumpur took the path of spreading out into other areas avoiding the untenable congestion in Kuala Lumpur. Putrajaya and KLIA speak volumes of your vision and what a giant of a man you are. I salute you, Tun.
amin tan

□ *zaman*
May 7, 2011 at 8:46 am

Salam Sejahtera Tun
Saya sangat bersetuju dengan cadangan Tun supaya hutan sebegini di kekal dan di jaga rapi.
Selalu memandang 'concrete jungle' membosankan.
Manusia perlu ketenangan.
Jangan lupa jambatan bengkok Tun, perjuangan mesti di teruskan.
Terima Kasih Tun

□ *Jaquar*
May 7, 2011 at 9:40 am

I whole heartedly agree with you on saving the trees that are remaining in Kuala Lumpur. The great big ficus bayan trees and angasana trees that used to be all over Kuala Lumpur during my childhood days are mostly gone. These trees takes years to grow to these stages and can be cut down in a single day in the name of so called development. It was a lot cooler in the old days in K.L. with all these trees providing shades to everybody and we all

love to sit below the trees to listen to the wind blowing and rustling the tree leaves. Kuala Lumpur should learn from Singapore on how to preserve a lot of these trees and build around them or dedicate certain areas as parks where these trees grows. Proper planning and preservation will save a lot of these trees with a continuous program of planting more shady trees every year. Malaysia is blessed with great weather where trees can grow easily and have greenery everywhere. Unfortunately Malaysian have forgotten how to appreciate trees that grows naturally and take everything for granted. The quest to be developed as the West has made K.L. into concrete jungles like them.

□ *jolly*

May 7, 2011 at 1:30 pm

Hi Tun,

In my humble opinion, perhaps the authority could come up with a new standard for those buildings developed by the big corporations in the KL city. All buildings must have some sort of hanging gardens (for high-rise buildings) or rooftop gardens (for low-rise, normal buildings) such that all these gardens can be joined together by hanging platforms, forming a continous pedestrian paradise, with beautiful flowers and small-size trees. The the city may be cooler, and the shoppers will be happy with the safe walkway.

□ *whitesnake*

May 7, 2011 at 4:46 pm

salam. thank you for greening KL....it creates jobs as well...other states capital should duplicate..

□ *Benderbuzz*

May 8, 2011 at 1:26 pm

Salam Tun.

Penjagaan dan pemulihan alam sekitar adalah aspek yang terlalu penting dalam kehidupan kita yang singkat ini. Oleh itu, pihak berkuasa perlu lebih peka dan prihatin dalam merangka dan melaksanakan dasar agar kelestarian alam sentiasa terjamin.

Kita ada beberapa jabatan seperti JPS, JAS, JKR dan PBT yang sepatutnya mengkoordinasikan bidang tugas mereka agar segala polisi dan tindakan yang diambil sentiasa menjurus ke arah alam yang sejahtera. Dalam soal pembersihan awam, kadangkala aktiviti yang dilakukan bertindihan antara satu sama lain. Sebagai contoh dalam pelaksanaan kerja-kerja memotong rumput, berlaku pertindihan antara JPS, PBT dan JKR sekiranya ianya dilakukan di kawasan berhampiran tebing sungai di belakang taman perumahan bersebelahan jalan raya persekutuan. Keadaan ini kelihatan remeh, tetapi impaknya sangat besar sekiranya masing-masing menafikan kawasan yang bertindih dalam bidang kuasa mereka.

Mungkin tidak ramai yang tahu bahawa punca banjir kilat adalah akibat tindakan kita sendiri. Sikap kita yang suka membuang sampah merata-rata merupakan titik mula segala masalah. Ketika hujan, sampah yang kita buang di atas jalan raya akan hanyut ke longkang kemudian seterusnya ke sungai. Keadaan diburukkan lagi apabila pihak yang bertanggungjawab menyapu jalan dan membersihkan longkang tidak melaksanakan amanah yang diberikan. Perangkap sampah di sungai tidak disenggara secara berjadual. Ditambah pula dengan sikap pemaju yang tidak mengawal aktiviti pembinaan dengan teratur menyebabkan lumpur mengalir ke saluran sehinggakan sungai menjadi cetek. Tindakan pihak PTG dan Jabatan Hutan yang gagal mengawal aktiviti pembalakan menambahkan lagi masalah. Tidakkah kita semua bertanggung jawab memastikan kesemua permasalahan ini

dipantau secara proaktif? Kita perlu buang sikap yang reaktif terhadap masalah kerana ianya merugikan sumber dan masa. Kita perlu ubah sikap kita supaya bertindak secara preventif.

Budaya selenggara rakyat Malaysia dikenalpasti berada pada tahap yang amat minima. Kita mengharapkan satu ciptaan magikal yang dapat menyelesaikan masalah kita secara total dan berterusan tanpa perlu menyelenggara. Inilah sikap sebenar yang ada di kalangan pegawai-pegawai awam yang bertugas di jabatan-jabatan tersebut. Sampai bila mereka perlu terus bersikap demikian, Wallahualam. Yang pasti tahun 2020 sudah semakin hampir.

□ *amin tan*

May 9, 2011 at 4:09 am

Dear Tun,

I am sad, angry and at the same time frustrated that there are so many rude, stubborn, selfish and trouble makers in our society. These people are the causes of friction, misunderstanding and disharmony in our society. They continue to accuse others as being racist, unfair, inferior and corrupted while they refuse to look at or reflect on their own shortcomings. Their refusal to respect others and constant attack of others as being inferior, racists, unfair and corrupted are the actual cause of friction and peace in our society. Our society would be better of and more peaceful without these provocative, negative and supremacist ingrates in our midst.

I strongly disagree that all students scoring 8A+ and above in SPM will be automatic scholarship recipients. To receive tax payers scholarships, the students must have the right attitude towards others, society and country and above all he must be humble and respectful of others and possess positive outlook of others. These scholarship holders are our excellent ambassadors in foreign countries.

amin tan

□ *Tanggung*

May 9, 2011 at 9:49 pm

Salam ybhg Tun,

Rata rata meletakkan tanggung jawab menjaga alam sekitar keatas bahu kerajaan. Seolah-olah kerajaan tidak proaktif, tidak pandai, penuh dengan korup dan sebagainya. Telah banyak kerajaan memberikan perancangan, kempen pengindahan dan sebagainya untuk menjaga alam sekitar negara. Tetapi apa pula tanggungjawab yg telah diberi oleh rakyat awam.. Walaupun telah disediakan tong sampah tetapi tetap juga membuang sampah ditepi tong sampah tersebut. Kononnya ada DBKL atau majlis perbandaran yg akan kutip. Begitu juga sampah dibuang sesuka hati ketika menggunakan lebuh raya. Kononnya dah bayar tol dan pihak konsesi kena kutip. Apa lagi kepada jalanraya biasa lagilah bertambah bertabur sampahnya. Kononnya ada JKR yg akan kutip. Kalau tak kutip dicakap JKR tk buat kerja. Tempat2 perkelahan sungai dan pantai dijaga rapi dgn pelbagai kemudahan. Tetapi pada tiap2 hujung minggu dan cuti, tempat2 tersebut akan bertaburan dengan sampah. Tempat parking keretanya pun bertaburan dengan sampah. Pada malam hari pula tempat2 ini dijadikan pula tempat maksiat dan pun ditaburkan sampah.

We are talking about greening the nation.

□ *Nikmat*

May 9, 2011 at 10:32 pm

Assalamu'alaikum Tun Dr Mahathir

I deeply agree with you Tun. I'm sure our gvment will take note/action with this issue.

□ [fbm_](#)

May 9, 2011 at 10:59 pm

Assalamualaikum tun,

1. Agree and the message should resonance on not just for DBKL but to all City/Town/Municipal Councils.
2. For someone who have not walk, commute or drive through the heart of the Klang Valley in five years, they would be in amaze of the changes. It is a bigger challenge for navigation software companies to keep up with the development of the Klang valley for the purpose of car satellite navigation as the streets and highways are alive and keep changing. And that somehow only reflects a fraction of the changes of KL landscape overtime.
3. The use of the word "Taman" in "Taman Perumahan" has lost its real meaning and has been totally diluted to be literary translated into concrete blocks and road tarmacs. A policy of a balance concretes and greens percentages should be encourage and then impose.
4. Urban planning, landscape architecture, environmental engineering. These are some of the core components of making sure that we develop the city and in the same time keep guard the jungles and makes them less "semak".
5. Some trees would require decades to grow big and shade the grounds. Building around them would cost a little bit more, but to say a few, they are the shades from the scorching sun on a hot day and perform as a natural dampener against flash floods.
6. Somehow the word maintenance has been printed too small in Malaysian dictionary. We always neglect maintenance on many scales and that includes our jungles and parks. Parks or jungles without maintenances within the city are nuisance either visually or socially.
7. A proper maintenance could save a lot of money from creating new artificial jungles. Maintain what are there, employ rangers and landscapers/'tukang kebun', and put some security patrols and then we could have a place where family of the city residents could have fun, in the same time keep the environment check and the city cool.

• [faa](#)

May 10, 2011 at 2:58 pm

Dearest Tun,

I wish that Malaysians would seriously consider sacrificing part of Kuala Lumpur and other busy towns by banning private vehicles entering certain areas for example around Kota Raya and Jalan TAR. I wish to see that only efficient public transport, shuttles, bicycles and trishaws/beca in the area. More trees could be planted as we no longer need very wide roads. If it is well planned, it could really boost our tourism, lower crime rate, less pollution and less time is taken to reach destination. Shopping is easier and more convenient. After all, beca can carry you right to the door step of the shop. I appreciate that we may have to spend more money because car parks has to be created outside the area but I don't think it is impossible.

• [parameswara 2](#)

May 10, 2011 at 8:26 pm

Dearest Tun

- 1-What makes tourists really appreciate Kula Lumpur is that forest in the city that makes KL awesomely green and dazling.
- 2-Yet we can actually do much more to make it even more super awesome by ensuring beautiful and easy to maintain trees are everywhere esp dorning the sides of our many just as impressive highways.

3-Plants like frangipani that is not only easy to grow but can also turn into beautiful trees with very colourful flowers could be one of the species to consider. So too are the bougainvillas. These plants don't even need too much water to excel.

4-Every city can have tall buildings, big, broad streets and sophisticated commuter system but not all cities can grow beautiful forest as cheaply and easily as in Kuala Lumpur. So DBKL should crack their heads to encourage the corporations to invest in really greening their premises with as many trees as possible.

5-Likewise all residential dwellers must also be encouraged to plant trees and create gardens out of their compounds. How about running competitions for the most beautiful gardens in the sections/Taman or even in whole of the Klang valley? Let us make the habit of appreciating the greenery/landscaping a part of our unique Malaysian civilization. The nursery owners would love me for this suggestion.

6-Thank you Tun for your vision in turning Kuala Lumpur into one of the most beautiful forested cities of the world. Now let us make it the most obvious most beautiful!

Thanks Tun

□ *parameswara 2*

May 10, 2011 at 8:27 pm

Dearest Tun

1-What makes tourists really appreciate Kuala Lumpur is that forest in the city that makes KL awesomely green and dazzling.

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Thanks Tun

□ *Idea*

May 11, 2011 at 11:33 pm

Dear Tun,

May you always be in good health.

THE MALAY POLITICIANS

1. In the name of economic development, forests are being replaced by concrete buildings.

2. Surely enough, these buildings are expensive. They are only affordable to certain classes of people. Not many of them are Malays. This means not many Malays are able to live in Kuala Lumpur.

3. Today we still see a few Malay politicians in urban constituencies. But with the decreasing

number of Malay voters, it is likely that they will be replaced by the others in the future.
4. Malay politicians are paving their way out of the city.

faa

May 12, 2011 at 10:12 am

Dear Tun,

I wish that Malaysians are ready to sacrifice part of the city to be greener. I wish to see areas like Kota Raya, Jalan TAR and alike to be limited only to public and loading vehicles, bicycles and trishaws (beca). With proper planning, there will be less traffic jam, less pollution and lower crime rate. With beca and bicycles, one could arrive at the doorstep and are forced to exercise more. Part of the existing roads could be utilized for trees planting. Imagine how beautiful it could be. I appreciate that it will involve a lot of cost particularly car parks need to be built outside the area but in the long run we could have less road maintenance cost. I sincerely hope Malaysians could consider my proposal.

Idea

May 15, 2011 at 9:42 am

Dear Tun,

I refer to my comment posted on May 11, 2011 at 11:33 PM. Paragraph 3 is to be corrected as:

'3. Today we still see a few Malay politicians in urban constituencies. But with the decreasing PERCENTAGE of Malay voters, it is likely that they will be replaced by the others in the future.'

Nikmat

May 17, 2011 at 12:00 am

Yang Amat Berusaha Tun Dr Mahathir,
Kuala Lumpur – Green

Green the Kuala Lumpur..... penghuni hidup aman dan sejahtera.
But not that Green laa, – rosak nanti.

jolly

May 18, 2011 at 11:42 am

Hi Tun,

In my humble opinion, there are a few things we can do with the hanging pedestrian paradise mentioned earlier.

We can build a main, linear platform hanging above the Klang river and allow private developers to join to the main platform to form a series of continuous platform.

We can have the electric bumper cars, bicycles only for the platform. We can join the platform with the LRT and future MRT stations.

Air pollution will be reduced. Congestion eased.

We may have flowing streams of water on the platform. Perhaps tamed animals should be allowed on a certain cordoned off walkways connected to Zoo Negara. A zoo within the city concept.

Just some ideas to make KL a world famous jungle. Thank you, Tun.

AHMAD BADRI

May 18, 2011 at 6:59 pm

Dear Tun and Chedet bloggers,

Back in 1987 there was a freak storm that attacked the City of London at night. The next day thousands of trees in the city parks were uprooted and damaged. I happened to be there then and took photos of the damaged mature trees, some as old as over 60 years. One striking common feature was the absence of tap root among all the trees. Hence the trees had no sufficient strength to withhold the strong winds.

The above is a common problem with many trees grown in many parts of Malaysia, especially with the Angsana (pokok sena, *Pterocarpus indicus*) which is abundantly found in Kuala Lumpur. These trees are very pretty when young, displaying beautiful young new leaves with nice overflowing canopy. They are relatively easy to grow, easy to maintain, can stand water stress and the city heat stress (hot convective surface wind), and their rooting system is suitable for the city pedestrian pavements. It is a good species for the city roadsides. Only problem is that it's not grown with tap roots, and hence there is no strength against strong winds. Also when it is old it is not that pretty anymore, with no more young light green leaves being produced. Plus the city avian scavengers, i.e. the black crows love to use these trees as their resting areas. The droppings of these birds, as everyone know, are so acidic, and can damage the paints of cars parked underneath the trees. We can find many of these trees along Jalan Raja Laut.

I particular like the mahogany trees (*Swietenia macrophylla*) along the sides of Jalan Raja Abdullah at Kampong Baru. They are sturdy, strong, with dense canopy and very green. Unfortunately they were not regularly pruned from the beginning, otherwise the branches could have been better well arranged. Another beautiful stretch is along Jalan Kuching, well landscaped with mature legumes. These yellow flames (*Peltophorum* sp) provide nice welcoming to KL if you are coming from the south along Jalan Kuching. There are also some kayu manis (*Cinnomomum iners*) along Jalan Pantai Baru, giving nice roadside landscape, but that's outside the city centre. Jalan Ampang is especially cozy with very matured trees giving nice aesthetics to a KL centre main road. Of course compliments to the landscape specialists who worked on the KLCC.

Long ago there was a huge rain tree, with beautiful canopy drooping giving majestic look, located at the junction of Jalan Raja and jalan Tun Perak. Then some idiot from DBKL chopped it down. This is sheer ignorance of the worst kind. It also happened to a number of other matured trees when an ignorant DBKL or MPPJ officer will just ask some Indon or Bangla fellow to chop it down. To give credits to DBKL, they used to hang some flowering annuals along some protocol roadsides. Now no more, how come? No money?

I also feel that some protocol roads such as Jalan Tun Razak, Jalan Bukit Bintang, Jalan Raja Lut, Jalan Tun Razak, Jalan Sultan Ismail, Jalan Ampang be carefully planned in terms of tree planting, tree maintenance and disease control. Also, much needs to be done for many stretches of roads within the inner city, especially the usually congested parts, at least with tall palms (if not enough space), or some shade trees (if there is some space). Note that species like the *Ficus* tend to have aggressive rooting behaviour.

I would like to suggest that wherever they have grown *Acacia* (*A. mangium* or the yellow acacia), please replace them, because these species are aggressive and invasive species and are of no particular aesthetic or ecological importance. Those tourists with knowledge will just laugh at our uneducated choice of planting such trees. Fast growing trees tend to break off easily.

Apart from the greens, we also hope that trees grown in the city would provide shade, cooling effect, good wind flow, good aesthetics. Also important is for these trees to attract local friendly birds (not the crows, which incidentally were brought to this country by an Englishman to fight against pests in his plantation. No thanks to him). Hedges and flowering species should attract the butterflies and friendly insects. Such beautiful trees make us citizens very proud.

I am not a city planner by training but have studied science and gathered some knowledge about city landscaping and I concur with Tun that KL has been well landscaped. Particularly during his tenure, there was a strong political will to beautify the city. We ought to give good compliments to the early city landscape specialists and planners for the beautiful KL city we have today. My old City Hall friends told me that Tun made very strong efforts to beautify and green the KL city and for that he should be well complimented. Thank you Tun Dr. Mahathir.

However, works on city beautification should go on. The prime minister, the WP Minister and City Hall Mayor ought to go around like what Tun did and see for themselves areas where improvements or alterations are needed with regards to city landscaping. Also, these people should go to the bookshop and buy books about trees and landscaping of the city and read them before going to bed. You will sleep well and have good dreams. Sorry this article is late in coming. I had problems accessing the site. Today I am lucky.

□ AHMAD BADRI

May 21, 2011 at 7:03 pm

Dear Tun and Chedet bloggers,

Back in 1987 there was a freak storm that attacked the City of London at midnight. The next day thousands of trees in the city parks were uprooted and damaged. I happened to be there and took photos of the damaged mature trees, some as old as over 60 years. One striking common feature was the absence of tap root among all the trees. Hence the trees had no sufficient strength to withhold the strong winds.

The above is a common problem with many trees grown in many parts of Malaysia, especially with the Angsana (pokok sena, *Pterocarpus indicus*) which is abundantly found in Kuala Lumpur. These trees are very pretty when young, displaying beautiful young new leaves with nice overflowing canopy. They are relatively easy to grow, easy to maintain, can stand water stress and the city heat stress (hot convective surface wind), and their rooting system is suitable for the city pedestrian pavements. It is a good species for city roadsides. Only problem is that it's not grown with tap roots, and hence there is no strength against strong winds. Even over 100 year pokok sena had been uprooted by freak storms. Also when it is old it is not that pretty anymore, with no more young light green leaves being produced. Plus the city avian scavengers, i.e. the black crows, love to use these trees as their resting areas. The droppings of these birds, as everyone know, are so acidic, and can damage the paints of cars parked below the trees canopies. We can find many of these trees along Jalan Raja Laut and many parts of KL city.

I particular like the mahogany trees (*Swietenia macrophylla*) along the sides of Jalan Raja Abdullah at Kampong Baru. They are sturdy, strong, with dense canopy and very green. Unfortunately they were not regularly pruned from the beginning, otherwise the branches could have been better well arranged and better canopy could have developed. Another beautiful stretch is along Jalan Kuching, well landscaped with mature legumes trees. These yellow flames (*Peltophorum* sp) provide nice welcoming to KL if you are coming from the south along Jalan Kuching. There are also some kayu manis (*Cinnomomum iners*) along Jalan Pantai Baru, giving nice roadside landscape, but that's outside the city centre. Jalan Ampang is especially cozy with very matured trees giving nice aesthetics to a KL centre main road. Of course compliments to the landscape specialists who worked on the KLCC.

Many years ago there was a nice mature rain tree near the junction of Jalan Raja and Jalan Tun Perak, but some nitwit idiot from DBKL gave the order to chop it down. Many other large mature trees had met the same fate when DBKL had given the same nitwit the authority to chop off trees in the city. This is sheer ignorance and ecological illiteracy of the worst kind. DBKL should have professional landscape and tree specialists to handle this sort of thing, and there should be good procedures so that expert opinion should be made

available. Why the WP Minister then made no apologies is beyond me.

City trees donâ€™t just provide shade and good aesthetics, but also break strong winds, provide breeze and cool the micro climate, provide resting areas of birds, and even increase the property values in well landscaped areas. Our trees should not be a haven for the crows, (which incidentally were brought to this country by an Englishman to fight against pests in his plantation. No thanks to him). Local friendly birds donâ€™t usually come near the crows (or for that matter aggressive migratory birds, which are strong and tending to be territorial).

I would like to suggest that wherever they have grown Acasia (A. mangium or the yellow acacia), please replace them, because these species are aggressive and invasive species and are of no particular aesthetic or ecological importance. Acasia is just like the lalang grass which invades open spaces, or the crows which can live on anything, or the ikan Bandaraya which lives and breeds happily in very polluted water. Unfortunately the City Hall was so bad many years ago, now the ikan Bandaraya, named after the city hall, is stuck forever.

Hedges and flowering species should attract the butterflies and friendly insects. Such beautiful vegetations in the city make us citizens very proud. The choice of hedges should be suitable for their physical functions, and should preferably be the flowering variety. There are anti-transpirants in the market to reduce the watering needs.

I hope DBKL would pay great emphasis in maintaining the mature trees in the city, and improve the landscaping of protocol and main roads such as Jalan Tun Razak, Jalan Ampang, Jalan Tun Perak, Jalan Sultan Ismail, Jalan Raja Chulan, Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman, Jalan Raja Laut, Jalan Raja Muda Abdul Aziz, Jalan Hang Tuah, Jalan Hang Jebat, Jalan Pudu and Jalan Parlimen. Certain sections of the inner city (around Lebuhraya Pasar Besar, Central market area) certainly need good boosting with greens, but due to the space limitations, certain palm species would be good, and annuals hanged from the lamp-posts. There used to be quite a lot of these flowering annuals, but now not so much anymore, I wonder why.

There are some slow growers which can tolerate the city micro-climate, such as bunga tanjung (mimosop elengi), the Ficus, and tembusu (Fagraea fragrans). Some trees are suitable for roadside, and better off to be in the park. Fast growing trees tend to break off easily. Also, maintenance pruning is necessary for all large and small trees to avoid breakage or damage during storms and strong winds. Please also bring back the flowering shrubs and trees.

I am not a city planner by training but have gathered some knowledge about landscape trees and city landscaping and I concur with Tun that KL has been well landscaped. Particularly during his tenure, there was a strong political will to beautify the city, this is what my friends at DBKL told me. We ought to give good compliments to the early city landscape specialists and planners for the beautiful KL city we have today. My old City Hall friends told me that Tun made very strong efforts to beautify and green the KL city and gave good ideas which were promptly implemented, and for that he should be well complimented. Thank you Tun Dr. Mahathir.

Nevertheless, works on city beautification and landscaping should go on. The prime minister, the WP Minister and City Hall Mayor ought to go around like what Tun did and see for themselves areas where improvements or alterations are needed with regards to city landscaping.

Selection of species and local landscaping are best left to the landscape and tree specialists, of which we have many good and talented and experienced locals. There is no need to import specialists from UK, Australia or Canada.

Sorry this entry is late; I had problems accessing the blog.

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