



**Beautification project:** The Precinct 8 market will have better facilities for traders and customers, while Taman Saujana Hijau (below) will feature a big field planted with sunflowers. — LOW LAY PHON/The Star

## Putrajaya staycations

The administrative capital will have an image boost with better features at its recreational parks and an upgrade of the Precinct 8 market to encourage more overnight trips by tourists.

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PUTRAJAYA is known for its abundant green spaces and state-of-the-art architecture.

Despite having 12 recreational parks and many iconic buildings, the administrative capital still struggles to attract tourists.

This is because many people go to the city only on day trips and do not spend the night, according to Putrajaya Corporation (PjC).

As such, PjC has embarked on projects to encourage visitors to spend the night in the city.

These projects are not only in the form of new attractions, but adding new features to existing ones to

make them more appealing to visitors.

Two existing attractions that will see an upgrade next year are Taman Saujana Hijau in Precinct 11 — one of the more popular parks in the Federal Territory of Putrajaya — and the Precinct 8 market.

### Flower power

Taman Saujana Hijau is a 40ha park famous for its themed gardens, namely European Garden, Oriental Garden and English Garden.

According to PjC statistics, Taman Saujana Hijau receives more than 1,000 visitors daily on weekdays and up to 4,000 visitors a

day on weekends.

The gardens' enchanting landscape and architecture offers a feel of being overseas, hence its popularity as a recreational spot and for wedding photography.

A sunflower field is set to be added to the park.

PjC landscape architect Jamaluddin Budin said about 5,000 sunflowers would be planted in one designated area in the park.

Currently, he said, there was already a smaller area in the park where these big bright yellow flowers were planted, attracting many people.

Realising the potential, PjC wants to grow a whole field of sunflowers. "Imagine how it will look when

all the flowers are in full bloom. It will be a sight to behold," he added.

If successful, the sunflower field will join other such fields like the Snake and Reptile Park in Kangar, Perlis, and Bagan Sungai Buring in Bagan Datuk, Perak.

PjC also plans to have a 1km trail steps in the park to guide visitors to the places around it.

Jamaluddin said additionally, the local authority had planted 142 Tecoma trees that produced pink flowers along the Putrajaya Steps in Precinct 1.

This is one of the latest attractions in the city, which will be officially launched soon.

At the peak of its blooming season, the pink Tecoma flowers are

reminiscent of Japan's famed sakura or cherry blossoms, thus offering a breathtaking view when the trees are lined in a row.

"In March, many people on social media shared stunning photos of pink Tecoma flowers taken around the country.

"Next year, hopefully these pink flowers will bloom and add value to Putrajaya," said Jamaluddin.

### Market makeover

Local markets are an attraction in some cities around the world and Putrajaya will not be an exception.

> TURN TO PAGE 3

### Perak

State government looking into better solid waste disposal system to preserve the environment

>2



### Johor

JB council heeds calls from city dwellers to set up more sites for recreation

>6



### Selangor

988FM unveils its 14th Chinese New Year album with notes of hope

>10

# Market traders look forward to positive changes

> FROM PAGE 1

In tapping the potential of the Precinct 8 market, PjC plans to spend RM500,000 to upgrade the facility in the hopes of adding it to the list of most popular markets in the region.

The market, one of two public markets in the city, is already a tourist destination.

Tour buses often stop at the facility for visitors to browse the stalls here and buy local produce.

Besides creating a better environment for tourists, PjC facilities management director Megat Ahmad Tarmizi Che Aini said the upgrade was necessary because the market was showing signs of ageing and had never undergone extensive repairs since opening more than two decades ago.

He said PjC could not renovate the premises previously due to the cost factor.

"We want to upgrade the property and its facilities to make it more comfortable for traders and customers," he said.

Megat Ahmad said upgrading works included floor repair, installation of floor traps (filters to stop rubbish from flowing into drainage outlets), and wall and floor tiles, among other things.

"The cold room, roof, toilet fixtures, furniture and stall frames will also be repaired or replaced.

"Besides that, we will instal a new price board, signage advertisement panel, vegetable and fruit racks at the stalls as well as new signage at the market's main entrance," he said, adding that the building would also get a fresh coat of paint.

The traders have been temporarily relocated to an area at the side and behind the complex, where they are operating under tents.

The two-storey market complex, which started operations in 2000, houses 47 trading lots with 32 on the ground level and another 15 on the first floor.

It is strategically located close to other facilities in Putrajaya, such as the Precinct 8 community hall, Neighbourhood Studying Centre, Surau Al-Mizan, food court and schools.



Jamaluddin: The sight of 5,000 sunflowers in full bloom at once will be phenomenal.



Sukhaimi: The traders are grateful for PjC's efforts to upgrade the Precinct 8 market.

StarMetro visited the market to observe the work progress and operations at the temporary trading site.

The traders claimed that business was poor in the first week after relocation because people had assumed the market was closed.

But over a month after the relocation, business is as usual and the traders are looking forward to the market's new look.

Precinct 8 Market Traders Association deputy chairman Sukhaimi Selamat said the traders were grateful for PjC's efforts.

"A big thank you to PjC for the much-needed upgrade.

"We can see the work being done at the market and look forward to moving back into the upgraded facility in January," he added.



A jogging and cycling track in Taman Saujana Hijau. — Photos: LOW LAY PHON and courtesy of PjC



Upgrading works at the Precinct 8 market are on schedule.