

# Batu Dam opens floodgate of fun

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KUALA LUMPUR: Dams are purely functional structures, but the beauty of the lakes they create make them ideal recreational sites.

The Federal Territory Drainage and Irrigation Department (DID) has been quick to spot the recreational possibilities which its easily-accessible Batu Dam can offer the public.

According to Federal Territory DID director Liew Chin Loong, the wide, man-made lake contained by the Batu Dam is an ideal spot for the angler and the boatman, while the area surrounding the dam could be made a welcome haven for golfers, trekkers, joggers and campers.

The Batu Dam's suitability for re-

Built three years ago at a cost of \$20 million, Batu Dam was designed to stop the waters of the Batu and Tua rivers from flooding the populous Klang Valley. Now it seems likely that the population of the Valley will shortly be flooding the scenic environs of the dam, as plans unfold to develop the area — a mere 17km from the heart of Kuala Lumpur — into a popular recreation spot.

creation derives from its closeness to the population centres of the Klang Valley. The dam is a bare 17km from the heart of Kuala Lumpur.

If the dam indeed becomes a place of recreation, it will be a welcome feather in the DID's departmental cap.

Built in 1985 at a cost of \$20 million and commissioned last year, the Batu Dam was built essentially to prevent flooding. Its catchment reservoir, fed by the Batu and Tua rivers, can supply

the Waterworks Department with 26 million gallons of water a day.

Mr Liew said parties interested in developing the area for recreational purposes should approach the Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister's Department.

With its 13.3km shoreline and scenic, 218-hectare lake, the Batu Dam will be an ideal spot for a number of outdoor activities.

At present, access is provided by a road which skirts the eastern shore of the lake.

Two areas have been found suitable for conversion into mini-golf courses. If properly maintained, Mr Liew explained, the golf courses would hold down the topsoil, control surface-water runoff and reduce the inflow of sediment into the catchment reservoir.

The DID has also proposed blazing trails for hikers in the adjacent forest reserve. Part of one such trail has already been completed.

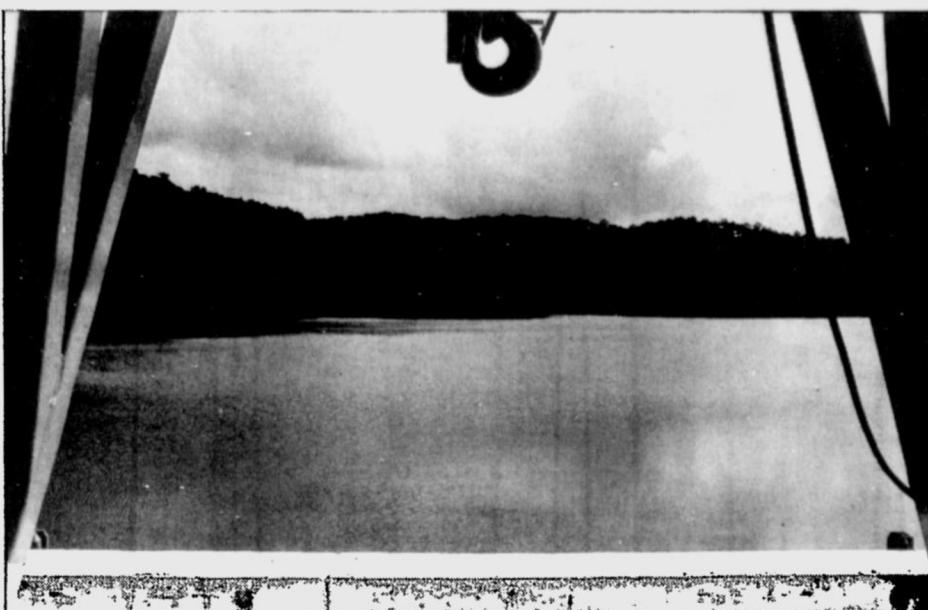
In order to lend substance to the ambitions of weekend anglers, the Fisheries Department released some 70,000 fish fry into the catchment reservoir last year.

On its own initiative, the DID is landscaping the area downstream of the dam, a task in which it is being assisted by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, Mr Liew added.

When more funds become available, the department will put up build courts, a children's playground, parking lots and an ornamental lake. Suitable areas for picnicking will also be prepared.



This area, just below Batu Dam, will be landscaped and developed for recreational purposes.



Part of the Batu Dam...ideal for recreation.

## Scenic secret at the end



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A picturesque view of the dam.