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Epitome of Nature



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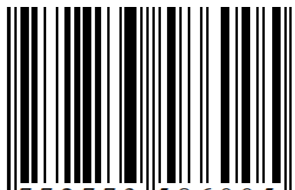
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Perspektif

KUALA KUBU BHARU, NATURE'S PLAYGROUND

By

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Bird watchers try to catch a glimpse of their favourite species, while adrenaline junkies feed their cravings through paragliding, white water rafting, or zip-lining. Being an enthusiast of outdoor activities myself (although now being older I tend to keep to a slower pace), I decided to utilize my weekend in Kuala Kubu Bharu paragliding. Conducted by a local paragliding club called CloudBass, the club operates from the Kuala Kubu Bharu Millennium Park, which is also their designated landing zone.

Passing through pristine forest overlooking the surrounding valley, it was a 20-minute ride using a pick-up truck to the starting point on the top of the hill next to the park. The organizer paired up passengers with pilots based on their combined weight, as each paragliding equipment can handle a maximum of 200 kilograms.

A while ago I had a doctor's appointment scheduled in Kuala Lumpur. Traveling from Johor, I decided to spend the weekend ahead of my doctor's appointment in Kuala Kubu Bharu, Selangor. I have driven through this quiet and charming town many times before, but never had the opportunity to experience the area myself. Kuala Kubu Bharu is in the district of Hulu Selangor, with a land area of approximately 177 hectares and a population of about 195 thousand people. With its network of rivers, waterfalls, rugged landscape, forests, and the nearby Fraser's Hill, Kuala Kubu Bharu is fast becoming the hub for nature lovers looking to escape their hectic life. Ramblers and hikers would prefer a walk or climb in the forest while others would visit the school of Kelah (Mahseer) fish at the Sungai Chiling fish sanctuary.

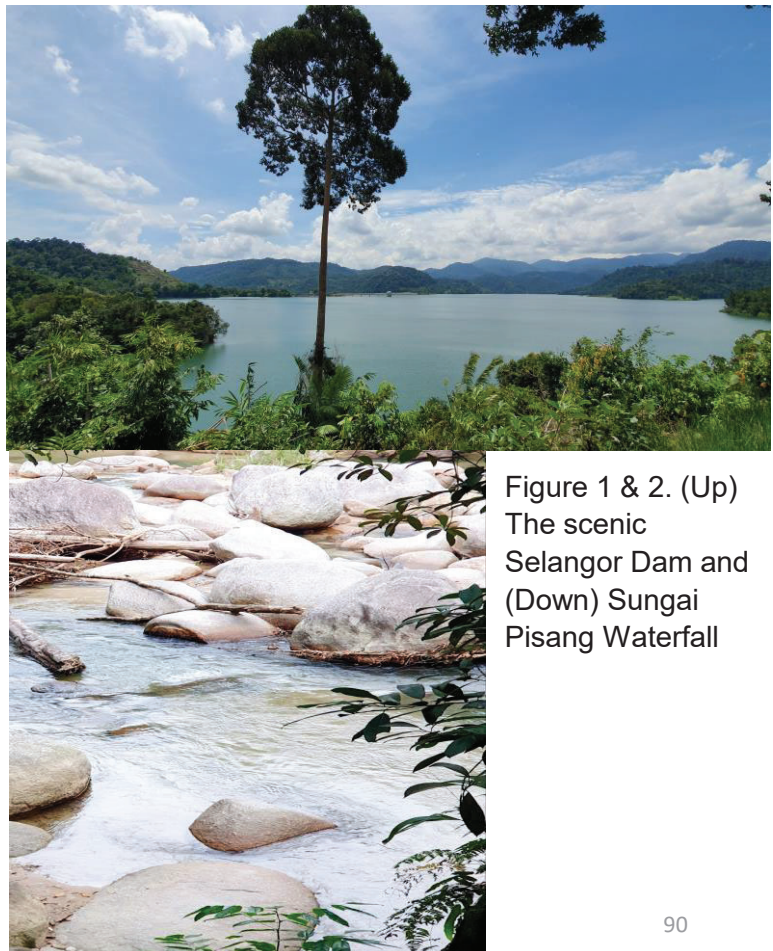


Figure 1 & 2. (Up) The scenic Selangor Dam and (Down) Sungai Pisang Waterfall

The pilot gracefully yet skilfully steered his gear, while we hovered above the canopy of forest. We were able to glide for approximately 20 minutes before landing safely. I was told that on a good day, with the wind and sun on their side, pilots riding alone can glide up to 40 minutes. I reckon that would have been such a wonderful experience. The club also conduct courses for paragliding training. Later in the day, I proceeded to Sungai Pinang recreational waterfall, 20 kilometres south of Kuala Kubu Bharu to spend the rest of the afternoon splashing away and cooling of in the water.

Sungai Pinang waterfall is part of the Batang Kali River network that runs from Ulu Yam Bharu to Rasa before merging with the Selangor River. There are many forest huts, chalets, small resorts, and camping sites along the river. The waterfall was clean and refreshing with many locals having picnics with family and friends. I would love to return for a white-water rafting endeavour the next time I am back in the area.

Kuala Kubu Bharu is fast becoming a playground for nature buffs. Totally recharged after a wonderful weekend, I might do not need to visit the doctor's office after all.

“I must admit that my breath was taken away, not just by the sheer height and following fright of a first-time paraglider, but also by the stunning beauty of the entire area, that providing me with an unobstructed ‘bird’s eye-view’ of Kuala Kubu Bharu.” – Siti Hazurah



Figure 2. Siti Hazurah paragliding over Kuala Kubu Bharu