



KERATAN AKHBAR

AKHBAR	: NEW SUNDAY TIMES
TARIKH	: 22/12/2019
JABATAN	: JPSM
KLASIFIKASI	: PERHATIAN

CONSERVATION

## New Taman Negara entry price, murky river mar writer's 34th visit to Taman Negara

**TAMAN** Negara Kuala Tahan, Pahang, is one of Asia's best national parks.

A lush tropical rainforest that's said to be 130 million years old, it is a paradise with good facilities and infrastructure.

My favourite points are the canopy walkway, river boat picnic trip to Lata Berkoh, visit to the aboriginal village, night walk and trekking to the peak of Gunung Tahan, which takes six days, albeit full of sweat and adventure.

This park, which qualifies as a natural World Heritage site, is home to an incredible array of flora and fauna that includes endangered tigers, elephants, gaur, tapir and one of the best birding sites in Asia.

My family just returned from a holiday there.

The forest trekking, animal and birds sightings were amazing. The park was clean and beautiful.

However, we were dismayed to hear that the entry price will be increased to RM30 from RM1.

This is a drastic increase of 30 times. It will affect the number of tourists visiting this beautiful heritage.

Was there research done or was it an ad-hoc decision?

Sungai Tembeling, despite the rainy season, was reddish brown in colour and was polluted with sediments, indicating there are activities upstream.

We were told that there is heavy logging on the opposite side of Taman Negara.

I saw lorries overloaded with logs when I took the road out of Taman Negara.

Is there control on logging? The state government must be proactive on conservation.

Isn't the state government interested in preserving these age-old forests, which are part of the state's rich ecosystem?

Who is behind these logging activities? An explanation by the Forestry Department is due.

The Department of Environment should inspect Sungai Tembeling and take samples to test the water quality.

It should perform due diligence and publish a study on the effects of logging.

I am surprised that the Wildlife Department is keeping quiet on this issue, which will affect the tourism flow.

This is my 34th visit to Taman Negara and I felt so disturbed when I saw the river pollution.

When will Malaysians learn to love their environment, especially our leaders and those departments assigned to be our heritage custodians?

Finally, why is this beautiful park not designated as a natural heritage site? Doing so will assure its sustainability in terms of activities and control, attracting more tourists.

The Wildlife and National Parks Department should take the lead.

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Gunung Tahan is one of the attractions at Taman Negara, Pahang. FILE PIC