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Felling of a century-old raintree

Decaying tree, a safety hazard, to be cut soon

By MANJIT KAUR
manjit@thestar.com.my

TAIPING: A 130-year-old raintree, which began leaning over about three years ago, has to be cut down soon due to its decaying state.

"The time has come for the tree here in Lake Gardens to be felled. Its rings will be preserved as a sculpture along the 630m Raintree Walk," said Taiping Municipal Council president Khairul Amir Mohamad Zubir (*pic*).

He said the preservation of its rings would enable the age of the tree to be known in years to come.

The tree was treated for decay caused by a type of fungus when it collapsed in 2018.

Subsequently, its surrounding root base was replaced with an

appropriate ground medium.

"Back then, the council with the advice from the Forest Research Institute of Malaysia's arborist, had treated and carried out propping works on the tree."

However, he said the tree was declared dead recently due to an invasion of an organism that caused its decay.

"It had structurally weakened the tree, with holes appearing on the trunk as well."

He said the tree had become a safety hazard.

The plan is to cut down the tree sometime this month, he said during an interview at the Lake Gardens.



Khairul Amir said there was another raintree that fell in 2016. Propping works were carried out, as well and the tree has since been fine "health wise".

The council has taken additional steps by planting three more raintrees along the walk.

"Raintrees have become an icon here. They are very close to the hearts of the people, not only from Taiping, but from other parts of the country as well."

"The trees along the walk are also nesting grounds for hornbills," he added.

Most of the raintrees at Lake Gardens are about 136 years old.



Time to chop: The 130-year-old iconic tree at the Raintree Walk at Taiping Lake Gardens. — RONNIE CHIN/The Star