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NATURE lovers can soon rejoice as the Johor Forestry Department has announced that its eco parks, mountains and hills will reopen to the public this Sunday following closure for over two months due to the monsoon season.

In a statement, the department said all eco forest parks, state forest parks, hiking trails, four-wheel drive routes in permanent forest reserve in Johor would be open to the public from Jan 15.

"The public should always be cautious and take immediate safety measures if there is a change in weather or environmental conditions.

"For hiking trails and extreme sports routes as well as activities within permanent reserve forest areas, it is necessary to apply for a permit from the nearest Forestry Office," said the statement.

The department also urged for cooperation from all



Onn Hafiz (right) attending a meeting with Johor Forestry Department senior officers at Kota Iskandar in Iskandar Puteri.

parties to reduce the spread of Covid-19.

Recreational activities were temporarily banned in all permanent forest reserves in the state due to the rainy season since Oct 29 last year.

The closure was a precautionary measure to avoid any untoward incident during the monsoon season.

Meanwhile, Johor Mentri Besar Datuk Onn Hafiz Ghazi said he had recently met with the depart-

ment's management team and was briefed by its director Datuk Salim Aman about future plans.

"The meeting was about Johor Forestry Department's development plans for eco park areas as a tourist attraction.

"As the agency responsible for the management of forest resources and the forestry sector, the department also actively implements forest preservation and conservation programmes in Johor," Onn Hafiz said in a statement on his Facebook page.

He thanked the department for

its commitment in managing and conserving forest areas in Johor, especially the permanent forest reserves.

"This is in line with the concept of sustainable forest management to ensure the sustainability and function of the forest for our future generations," he added.

Among the popular eco parks and mountains in Johor are Gunung Arong Recreational Forest, Panti Forest Eco Park, Gunung Pulai Recreational Forest and Sungai Bintang Recreational Forest.