

BY AUDREY TAN

» Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum

**A** WALK through Singapore's first and only natural history museum is meant to be a serene experience, much like taking a walk in a lush forest.

That is why the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum, which opens its doors to the public next Tuesday, is selling tickets for 1½ hour slots and not daily passes that allow guests entry at any time they choose.

"We calculated that the whole gallery experience will be between one and 1½ hours, so we calibrated the slots on that basis," museum head Peter Ng told *The Straits Times*.

"Because of the initial interest, we did not want this place to be (a) 'free for all' – because then

# Keeping crowds down with time-slot tickets

guests would not get the same experience," he added.

There are six such sessions throughout the day, with the first at 10am and the last at 5.30pm.

Each slot can accommodate about 200 people, and tickets must be pre-booked through ticketing agent Sistic as they are not available for sale on site.

Tickets cost \$20 per adult and

\$12 per child, but Singaporeans and permanent residents enjoy discounted rates of \$15 per adult and \$8 per child.

But Professor Ng stressed that guests would not be turned away the minute their time runs out.

The time limit is merely an administrative guideline for selling tickets, so as to control the crowd in the 2,000 sq m exhibition

space, he added.

Visitors to the museum, which is located within the National University of Singapore campus in Clementi, can browse a treasure trove of 2,000 artefacts in its biodiversity and heritage galleries.

They include the genuine fossils of three diplodocid sauropod dinosaurs, which are among the largest creatures to roam the

earth 150 million years ago.

In response to netizens who ask why the museum is charging an admission fee when most museums here do not, Prof Ng said it was because the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum is not an institution under the National Heritage Board.

The statutory board under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth runs six museums here including the National Museum of Singapore, which Singaporeans and permanent residents enjoy free admission to.

"The museum needs to be financially independent. The endowments and donations have been able to subsidise a large chunk of operating costs, but not fully. Therefore, we need ticketing to offset some of those costs," Prof Ng said.

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