

THE GENERAL REPORT
ON
THE STUDIES OF OMAR PARK

JAPAN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGENCY



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GENERAL REPORT

Name a of Experts : Mr. Makoto Aruji
Parks & Greens Division, City Bureau, Ministry of Construction

Mr. Katsuhiro Ishida
Housing and Urban Development Corporation

Country Delegated to: Panama

Guiding Subject : Study on the Background with respect to
Panama Citizen Parks under the Request for
cooperation

Delegated Period : From Feb. 3 to Feb. 16, 1988

Government Organization delegated to : Ministry of the Presidency

Date of Report Prepared : March, 1988

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[1] Outline of Subject

Panama government's requirements for cooperation by Japanese government at this time is related to the development plan for Omar Park (Parque Recreativo Omar) located in the central area of Panama City.

The background for this is that the relations between both countries are becoming closer since President visited Japan as a National guest in March, 1980 for the first time. As a matter of fact, the bust of the late Mr. Ohira, Prime Minister is built inside Omar Park as the activities for symbolizing the close relationship of both countries. As this, Omar Park is of the close connection with Japan and is the symbolic image of the friendship between Panama and Japan. Under such situations, Panama government requested Japan to delegate the experts for preparing the development plan to utilize Omar Park for practical use.

However, the circumstances of the parks in Panama are unknown to us, and it was decided that the investigation on the background for the requirements should be conducted in order to appropriately comply with the requirements by Panama government.

The concrete contents of the investigation on the background for the requirements are as follows,

- 1) Outline of natural recreation resources and needs, etc. in Panama.
(Distribution, contents, utilization conditions, etc. of recreation resources, open space, etc.)
- 2) Outline of Omar Park
 - ① Outline of the present plan for utilization of the land and major facilities in the park
 - ② Management and administration of the park and trend of

utilization therefor

- 3) Position of Omar Park in General Planning for Park Project and Recreation Project in Panamanian metropolitan area.
- 4) Concrete contents of requirements for Omar Park, etc. by Panama government.
- 5) Organizational structure of Panama government for performing this project.

[2] Study Schedule

The schedule and the contents of this study from Feb. 3 to Feb. 16, 1988 are as follows,

Feb. 3, 1988 (Wed) Lv. by JL006, transit to EA977 at New York

Feb. 3, 1988 (Wed) Ar. at Panama Airport (20 : 15)

Feb. 4, 1988 (Thu) AM. Meeting with Japanese Embassy
Meeting with Mrs. Guevara, Bureau
Manager, MIPPE
PM. Meeting with Mrs. Malek, Office Manager,
First Lady Office Courtesy visit to
President's Madam at private residence

Feb. 5, 1988 (Fri) AM. Meeting with Panamanian staffs at
Omar Park office (concerning the schedule
and our requisition for various kinds
of data)
PM. Study on the actual situation of Omar
Park

Feb. 6, 1988 (Sat) Study on the actual situation of the
recreation facilities in the city

Feb. 7, 1988 (Sun) Rest

Feb. 8, 1988 (Mon) Study on the recreation facilities in the city
together with Panamanian staffs
* Olympic stadium
* Cemeteries

- * Old Panama
- * Campus of University of Panama
- * Race track

Feb. 9, 1988 (Tue) Study on the natural parks with Panamanian staffs

- * Curundo Park
- * Soberania Park
- * Summit Park

Feb. 10, 1988 (Wed) AM. Summary on the study results and the exchange of the various information at Omar Park office

PM. Meeting with Japanese Embassy

Feb. 11, 1988 (Tue) AM. Observation of Ancon Hill

PM. Meeting with Panamanian staffs and Mrs. Malek, Office Manager, First Lady Office

Feb. 12, 1988 (Fri) At Omar Park office

Confirmation of the various reports
(Tramilation of Spanish into English)

Feb. 13, 1988 (Sat) Summing up

Feb. 14, 1988 (Sun) Lv. by PA428 and Ar. at New York via Miami
Stay in New York for a night

Feb. 15, 1988 (Mon) Lv. by JL005 and

Feb. 16, 1988 (Tue) Ar. at Narita Airport

[3] Outline of Omar Park

The park had been utilized originally as a golf course and was opened as the facilities for Panamanian sports recreation and various cultural activities due to urbanization of Panama City.

The site of the park is located at the so-called new urban area within Panama City area, and the residential town including the high class residential area are developed in the surroundings of the park.

The geographical features of the site is hilly based on lawn and forest because the former golf course was utilized as it was, and the facilities are poor as mentioned hereafter.

The access to the park is the front road only. (AVE. BEUSARIO PORPAS), and most of the visitors appears to use the busses and private cars, etc.

Panama government explained concerning the purpose of utilizing Omar Park as follows,

1. The place for recreation and leisure activities where it has solely the vast are (approx. 56 hectares) within Panamanian metropolitan area.
2. The place for educating the children and youth in Panamanian metropolitan area through sports and cultural activites.
3. The place for enjoying the outdoor recreation by Panamanian citizen.
4. The place for contributing to the preservation of the urban environmental circumstances in Panama City.

(1) Major Facilities

The following are the major facilities in the park and the construction schedule of the project.

Major Facilities List

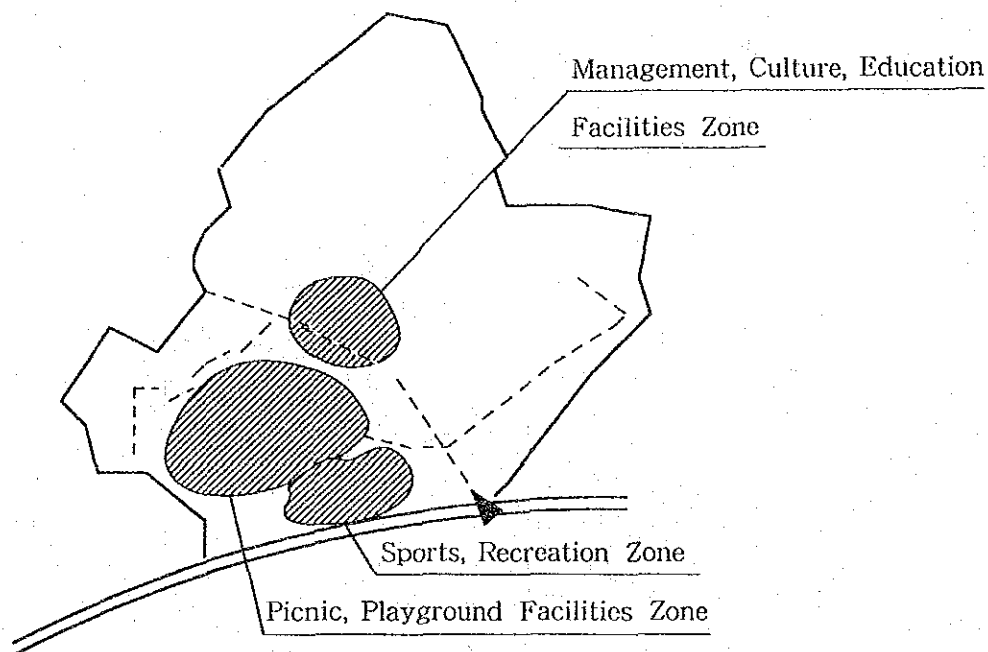
| Facility Name | Area (m ²) | Construction Time | Rearrange-ment Time | Actual Facility Conditions | | | Actual Equipment Conditions | | | Remark |
|---|------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|--------|------|-----------------------------|--------|------|-------------------|
| | | | | Good | Normal | Poor | Good | Normal | Poor | |
| 1. General Affairs, Management Area | | | | | | | | | | |
| a. Resumption in Society Office (Ofc. Com. Pro. obras de Beneficencia) | | 1981 | 1981 | ○ | | | | | | Out of use |
| b. Planning Office | | do. | 1986 | ○ | | | ○ | | | |
| c. Boys Town Office | | do. | — | ○ | | | ○ | | | Future relocation |
| d. Ministry of Trade and Industry Office (MICH Office) | | do. | 1986 | ○ | | | | ○ | | |
| e. Park Management Office | | do. | — | ○ | | | | ○ | | |
| e ₁ Guardmen Room | | 1979 | — | ○ | | | | ○ | | |
| e ₂ Working Room | | 1981 | — | | | ○ | | | | |
| e ₃ Store | | do. | — | ○ | | | | ○ | | Future relocation |
| e ₄ Nurses Office | | 1980 | — | | | ○ | | | ○ | |
| 2. Playing Facilities Area | | | | | | | | | | |
| a. Children's Playground | | 1980 | | | ○ | | | | | Under repair |
| a ₁ For 2 - 4 years of age | | do. | | | ○ | | | | | |
| a ₂ For 4 - 6 years of age | | do. | | | ○ | | | | | |
| a ₃ For more than 5 years of age | | do. | | | ○ | | | | | |
| b. social Education Area | | 1982 | | | | | | | | |
| c. Playground for Japanese Equipment | | 1982 | | | | | ○ | | | Future relocation |
| 3. Sports Facilities | | | | | | | | | | |
| a. Soccer Field | | 1984 | | ○ | | | | | ○ | Future relocation |
| b. Tennis Court | | | 1983/1987 | ○ | | | | | ○ | |
| c. Basket Field | 600 | 1977 | | ○ | | | | | | ○ |
| d. BMX Track (Pista BMX) | 276 | | | | | | | | | |
| e. Swimming Pool | | | | | | | | | | |
| f. Roller Skating Field | 625 | 1981 | | ○ | | | | | ○ | Out of use |

| Facility Name | Area (m ²) | Construction Time | Rearrangement Time | Actual Facility Conditions | | | Actual Equipment Conditions | | | Remark |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|--------|------|-----------------------------|--------|------|--------|
| | | | | Good | Normal | Poor | Good | Normal | Poor | |
| 4. Family Area | | | | | | | | | | |
| a. Rest House (Bohios) | | | | ○ | | | | ○ | | |
| 5. Social Education and Culture Area | | | | | | | | | | |
| a. Amphitheater (Outdoor Stage) | | 1981 | | ○ | | | | ○ | | |
| b. Future Theater | | 1981 | | ○ | | | | ○ | | |
| c. Library | | 1983 | | ○ | | | ○ | | | |
| d. Reception Hall for Rental | | | | | | | | | | |
| d ₁ . Main Hall | | 1981 | | ○ | | | | ○ | | |
| d ₂ . Youth Hall | | do. | | ○ | | | | ○ | | |
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(2) Space Structure and Features

The existing space structure of the park is as follows,

Space structure (existing) in Omar Park,



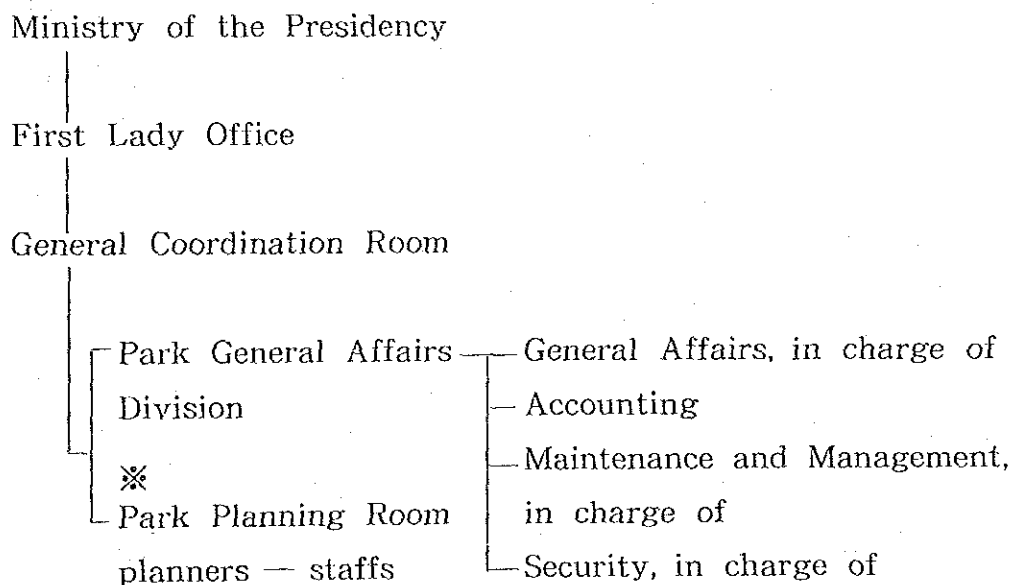
Major features are as follows,

- 1) Each facility has no connection each other in park planning and the facilities appear to be arranged with careless.
- 2) The arranged zones are located partially in the site of 56 hectares. Consequently the zones in use are limited.
- 3) The houses such as the park management office had taken over and converted the facilities at the time of the former golf course and are remarkably superannuated.
- 4) The field athletic facilities which had been donated by

Japanese enterprises in 1982 (these playground equipments are so-called JAPON in panama) are out of use and in miserable condition, because they did not know how to play with or use the equipments and the manual for maintenance was not available.

- 5) The various kinds of trees fitting to the weather and climate grows well and the park has fully the character as a park.
- 6) By out observation, it was found that a large number of children, youth and families utilized the park during the summer vacation in the dry season and the park was popular comparatively even in the present condition.

(3) Organizational Structure of Omar Park



* Presently several architects and no landscape architects are employed. In future it is possible to employ landscape architects as the need arises.

(The cooperation system of Japan, and the appropriate measures to be dealt with as necessary are expected.)

**Management Personnel List for the Major Facilities
in Omar Park**

| Facility Name | Management | |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Club House | Ministry of the Presidency | First Lady Office |
| 1 General Affairs | Ditto | Ditto |
| 2 Mezzanine | Ditto | Park Management Office |
| 3 Planning Room | Ditto | First Lady Office |
| 4 Boys Town Office | Ditto | Ditto |
| 5 Ministry of Trade and Industry Office | Ministry of trade and Industry | |
| 6 Guard Box | Ministry of the Presidency | Park Management Office |
| 7 Toilet | Ditto | Ditto |
| 8 Main Hall | Ditto | Ditto |
| 9 Outdoor Space | Ditto | Ditto |
| 10 Store | Ditto | Ditto |
| 11 Roller Skating Field | Ditto | Ditto |
| 12 Public Toilet | Ditto | Ditto |
| 13 Library | Ministry of Education | |

(4) Park Operation and Utilization Condition

1. The operation of Omar Park is conducted by the First Lady Office. The outdoor activities program during the summer vacation (from December to March) is prepared and the park is utilized systematically.
2. The opening hour of the park is between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. everyday and the park can not be utilized in night time due to the security reason. (Actually the fence is installed alongside the boundary of the park facilities.)
3. By our observation it was found that numbers of families utilized the park concentrating to the playground facility zone.
4. Example of the investigation conducted by the students of University of Panama. (June. 1983)

i. Total visitors to the park

2,552 persons for a period of two days

| | | | |
|------------|---|----------|---------------|
| Break down | { | Children | 1,418 persons |
| | { | Adults | 1,134 persons |

- ii. Individual interviews were conducted for 400 persons out of them.

| <u>Frequency for us</u> | <u>Number of visitors</u> |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Every day | 55 persons (14 %) |
| Once a week | 144 persons (36 %) |
| Once two weeks | 58 persons (15 %) |
| Once a month | 54 persons (13 %) |
| sometimes | 89 persons (22 %) |
| Total | 400 persons |

[4] Panama Government's Requirements for Omar Park etc.

It was recognized in the meeting at site that Panama Government would require the Japanese technical cooperation with respect to the following items.

1. Planning of regional recreation system and park scheme in Panamanian metropolitan area including the natural parks, city parks and historical area (such as the Old Panama, the France Square, etc.)
2. Omar Park particularly is expected to be the base place of the recreation facilities in Panamanian metropolitan area, therefore
 - 1) Preparing the master plan from the long-term view
 - 2) Preparing the step-by-step (development) plan on the above basis
 - 3) Preparing the undertaking scheme (financial plan) for the above plan
 - 4) Preparing the management and operation system of the park facilities for the above plan
3. Planning of the improvement scheme from the viewpoint of recreational utilization concerning the various parks (e.g. Soberania Natural park, etc.) in the metropolitan area.
4. Proposal on the improvement scheme for the existing organization and operation system (the related governmental ministries and divisions) in order to unify the administration for park and recreation.

It is expected that the Japanese experts of park and recreation belong to First Lady Office Ministry of the Presidency and undertake the work together with the governmental staffs.

[5] Summary

The contents of the requirements by Panama government can be understood as follows,

1. The population in Panama is approximately 2.2 million (estimated in 1985) and the population in Panama City, the metropolis is 600 thousand. In Panama City the urbanization is recently proceeding and the population in the city is increasing. Consequently Panamanian urban zone has expanded to 15 – 20km in east-west and 10 – 15 km in south-north, and Omar Park is located at the so-called new urban area and also geographically around the center of Panama City.
2. The result of the investigation at site conducted with respect to the dynamic and static recreation activity places for Panamanian citizen shows that there are several parks in small scales (children's park and neighbourhood park class) in the city, however the actual number of parks is insufficient for the requirement, and the small-scale parks and after-mentioned Summit Park are not under the jurisdiction of the government, but of Panama City.
3. Their strong intension is that the natural parks such as Summit Park, Soberania Park, etc. (especially the botanical garden established by U.S.A. is the nucleus of Summit Park that is the center-core park in Soberania Natural Park) where can be reached within about one hour from the city center are not only the parks with a principal object of the protection of nature but also must be the parks having recreation functions of weekend-use type (being familiar to the nature by camping, hiking, etc.).

4. With respect to the schemes of the conservation and restoration of the historical buildings, and the restoration of the landscapes such as the Old Panama, * etc., they expect out cooperation from viewpoint of the recreational space preparation.

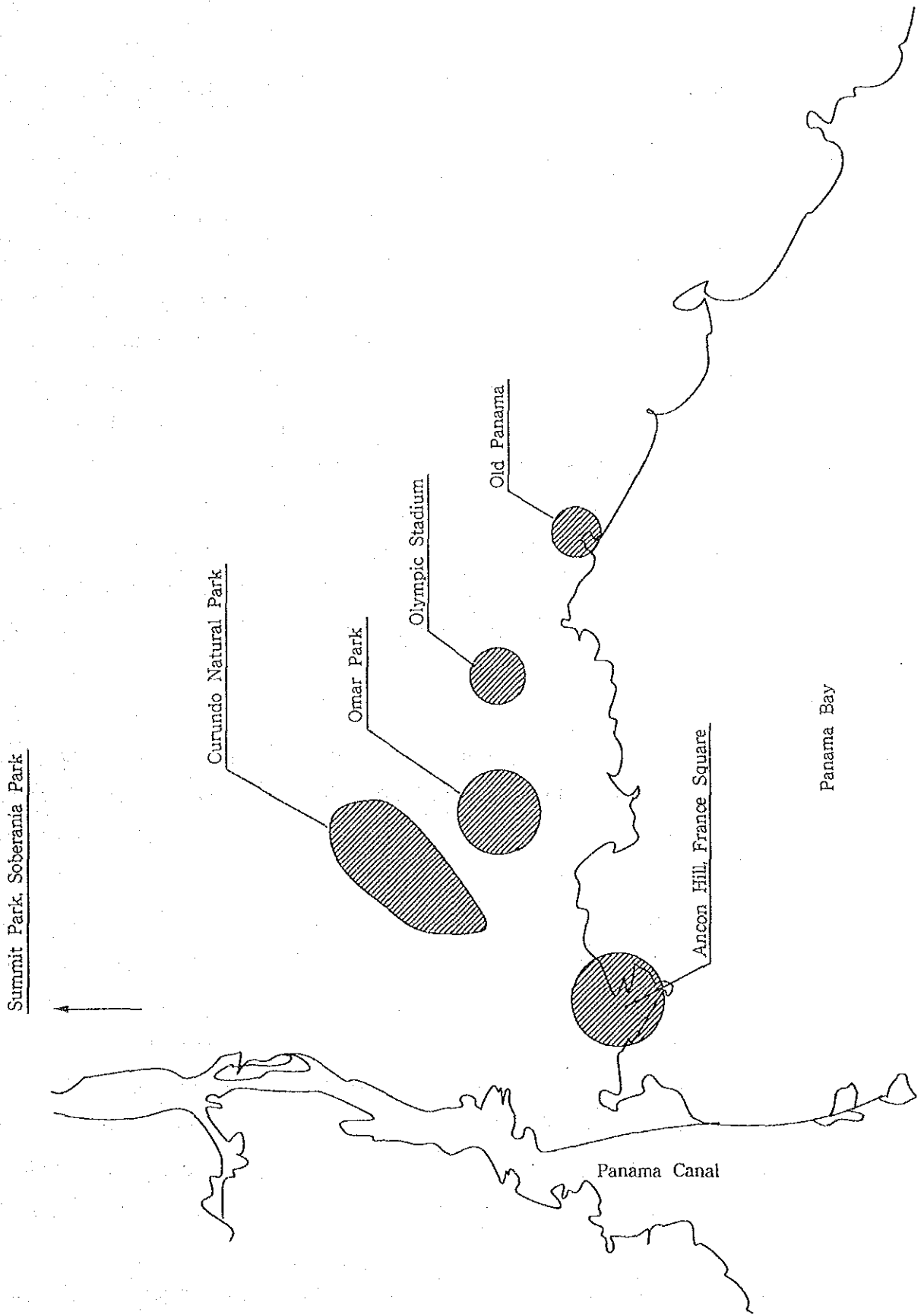
Note : * The Old Panama was the garrison town of Spanish army in 16th, century, but was destroyed by plunder of viking Henry Morgan. Presently the stone-piled castle walls, the ruins of the churches, etc. are remained, and prepared and maintained as the park.

5. The athletic field, swimming pool, etc. where Central and South America Olympic Games was held are existing, but became too old.
6. Other facilities are the racetrack, private yacht clubs, and golf courses which are privately organized as club, however the utilization of them is limited to a part of the persons. U.S. forces have many facilities including many sports facilities. (Detailed investigation was not conducted at this time.)
7. Water in Panama Bay is remarkably polluted, and is not fit to utilization for recreation.

From the above-mentioned study the background for the Japanese technical cooperation at this time is concluded as follows,

It is intended that the preparation and maintenance scheme for Omar Park is not only planned, but also the park and recreation scheme in regional area i.e. in Panamanian metropolitan zone as urban plan is planned.

Spacious distribution chart of major recreations in Panamanian metropolitan zone



(6) Themes to be dealt with in Future and Proposals

1. With respect to the establishment of the park scheme and recreation scheme in the whole metropolitan zone proposed by Panama government, the draft plan and examination should be conducted in coordination with land utility scheme, traffic scheme, the movement survey on population prediction, etc., analysis of various needs by citizen, etc. from viewpoint of the analysis of the present social circumstances and the future prospects.

Further it would be significantly prospected that the urban framework as the physical plan would be changeable due to the new treaty ("Panama Canal Treaty"), etc. concluded between Panama and the United States of America on January, 1977 concerning Panama Canal.

In consideration with the above-mentioned matters it is very useful and important that the master plan is prepared from the long-term view (e.g. a period of 15 years later etc.), however the necessity of performing the plan would be somewhat reduced from the viewpoint of its realization, etc.

Consequently it is desirable that the master plan would be prepared for the period of 2 or 3 years while the mutual consent with the persons concerned of the governmental offices is obtained, furthermore such activities would result in the reform of the administrative organization. Meantime we would like to study the possibility of Japanese cooperation with them when the committees concerning recreation (composed of various governmental offices) is established in Panama government.

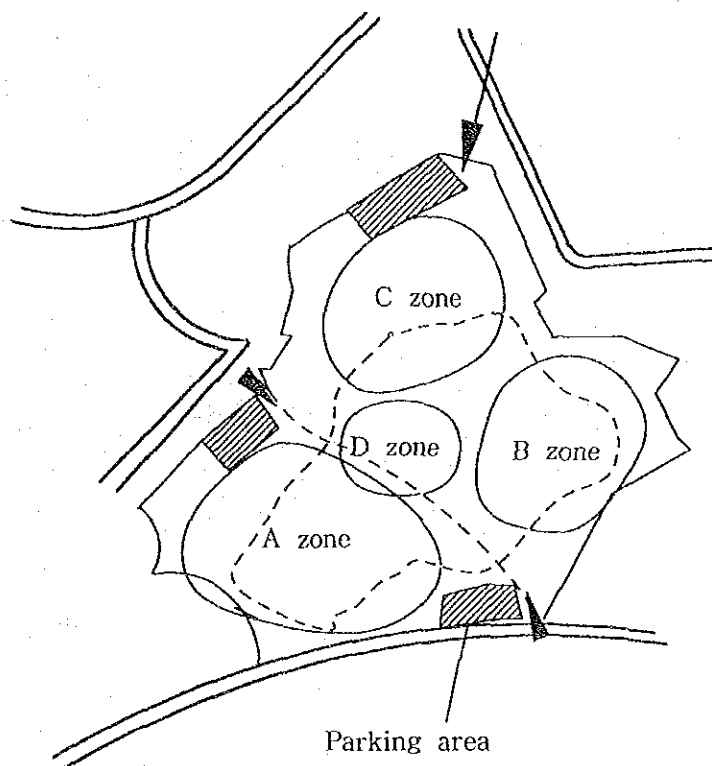
2. When the preparation scheme of Omar Park is settled, population prediction, analysis of various needs by citizen and allotment of recreational functions (e.g. division of natural park and city

park, daily use zone and weekend use zone, and arrangement of each facilities related to the above in each park), further the plan of the access road toward the park from the surrounding places of Omar Park are necessary.

3. Idea on the development of Omar Park

Concept idea on the development of Omar Park

(as one of ideas)



| | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-----|--|
| Traffic scheme | * by walking | } → | Access into the Park from 3 - directions at least is required. |
| | * by bus | | |
| | * by private car | | |

- A Zone * Sports recreation (Soccer, baseball, tennis, etc.)
 * playground (Square for children's playground equipment)
- B Zone * Leisure zone (Swimming pool, gymnasium)
- C Zone * Landscape pond (boating), Water square
 * Camping field
- D Zone * Culture zone (Library, concert hall, various entertainments, community plaza),
 Japanese plaza, history museum

Themes

- ① Estimation of the users (number of users, users' ages)
- ② The measures for access to the parks
- ③ Kind of the facilities (capacity and kind of facilities)
- ④ Necessity of containing the symbolic space or facility expressing the friendship between Japan and Panama (as an idea)
- ⑤ Method for summing up the project (the contents of the project, budget, the period of undertaking the project, establishment of step-by-step preparation scheme, etc.)
- ⑥ The measures of management and operation
- ⑦ The budget for the maintenance and the management is insufficient by judging from the present situation, therefore the way of securing the fund for the above should be considered.

For example : A part of the management expense is paid by the income from some admission-paid facilities (pool, concert hall, Gymnasium, etc.) that are decided in future.

The above-mentioned themes are picked up even if the preparation scheme is limited to Omar Park. For the time being we would prepare the master plan for the parks and leave it to Panama government's judgement.

4. Concept for the Future Cooperation

The concept for the future cooperation was studied on the basis of Panama government's requirements and the results of the investigation in the field and the results are as follows,

The Panamanian intention including not only First Lady Office but also the persons concerned with respect to the preparation of citizen's recreation facilities is very strong, therefore it would be desirable that Japanese government would cooperate in various aspects.

For the time being the cooperation is expected to place emphasis on the preparation of Omar Park project, however as the master plan for the parks and recreation facilities in the whole metropolitan zone is very important, it is desirable that we will cooperate with them when the organization for the above in Panama will be established.

1) The preparation of the master plan for the parks and recreation facilities in Panamanian metropolitan zone

The study will be made by us when the consolidated organization such as the governmental committee is established.

i. Assignment of the experts for a long period

2 persons for a period of 2 - 3 years

City planning, Open space planning, recreation planning

ii. Cooperated investigation for development

(to be conducted for a period of 2 - 3 years)

2) Planning of the preparation scheme for Omar Park when the above-mentioned work of 1) has been completed, this theme shall be planned under the appropriate function allotment, however for the time being the cooperation would be performed with respect to Omar Park project which Panama government strongly requires even if the master plan for the metropolitan zone is brought behind (it is desirable to perform both projects at the same time).

i. Planning of the preparation scheme of whole Omar Park (2 - 3 drafts to be prepared including the alternative drafts)

* Whole space construction

* Construction plan

* Circulation plan

* Facilities plan (including a plan of reusing the existing facilities)

* Drainage plan

* Planting plan (including a plan of reusing the existing trees)

ii. Planning step-by-step preparation scheme

iii. Study on approximately project expense, etc.

iv. Study on the maintenance management and operation method, etc.

A period of 3 to 4 months for 4 to 5 persons is considered necessary.

* One coordinator — each two weeks,
(before and after the work for determination of the policy and summing up)

* Whole scheme, Circulation plan and construction plan
— 1 person for about 4 months

* Land utilization plan and planting plan
— 1 person for about 4 months

* Facilities plan and drainage plan
— 1 person for about 4 months

* Management and operation plan
— ** 1 person for about 4 months

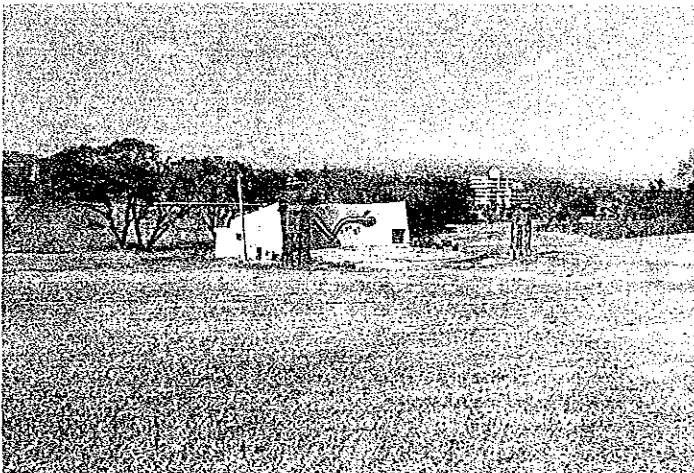
** The latter 2 months are allowable.

Omar Park



Park Management office

This building is used as the office after the former club house for the golf course was converted.



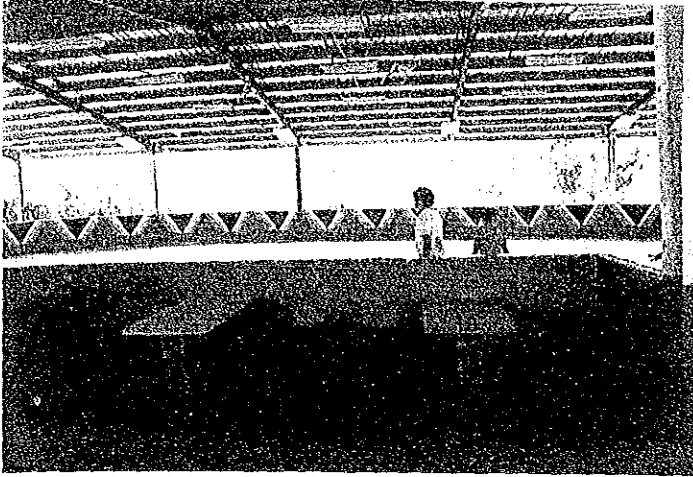
Amphitheater (Outdoor stage)

This theater was built with no relation to the other park facilities.

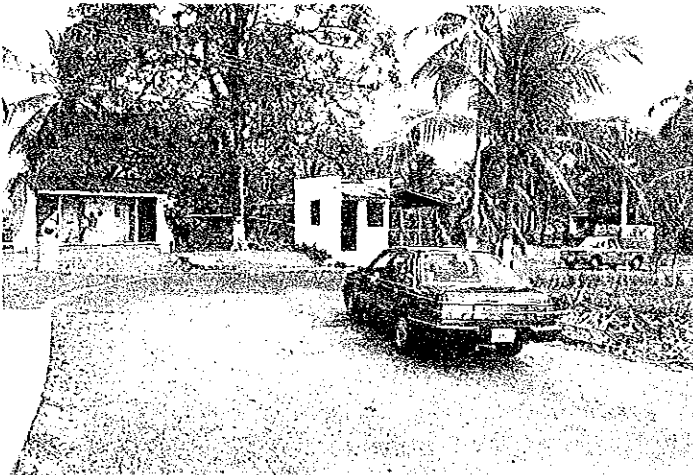


Appearance of the roller-skating field

This is utilized well by outdoor activities program for the period of children's summer vacation.



The buildings facilities are in poor conditions, but it deems amazing that such facilities are managed and operated well.



The white building right in the face is the guard box and guard men stay here all the time.

Front entrance of Omar Park

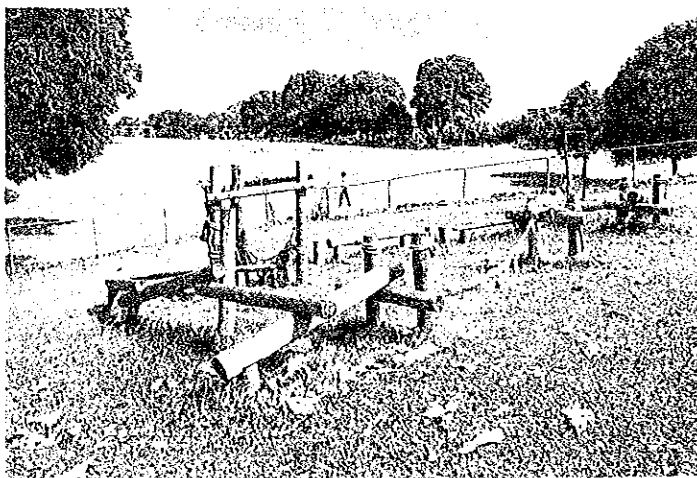
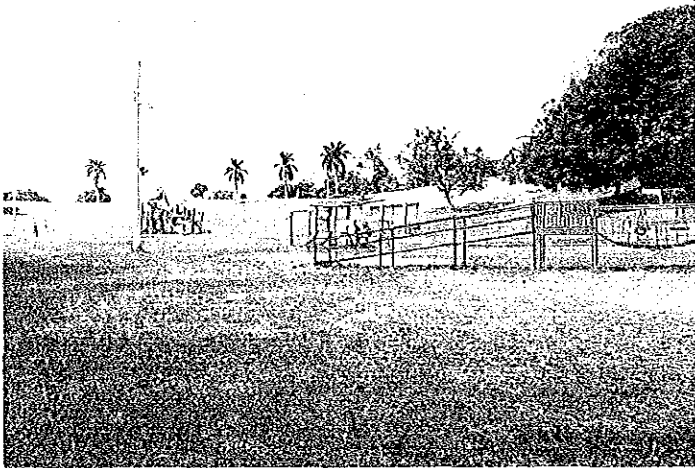


Viewing toward the management office from the front entrance.

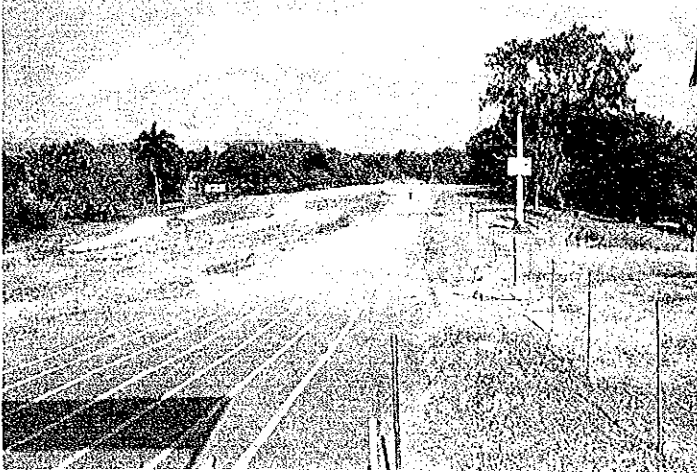


Playground facilities zone

Various playground equipment is studied. The visitors could not be found due to the daytime, but numbers of visitors used to be here after 3 p.m..



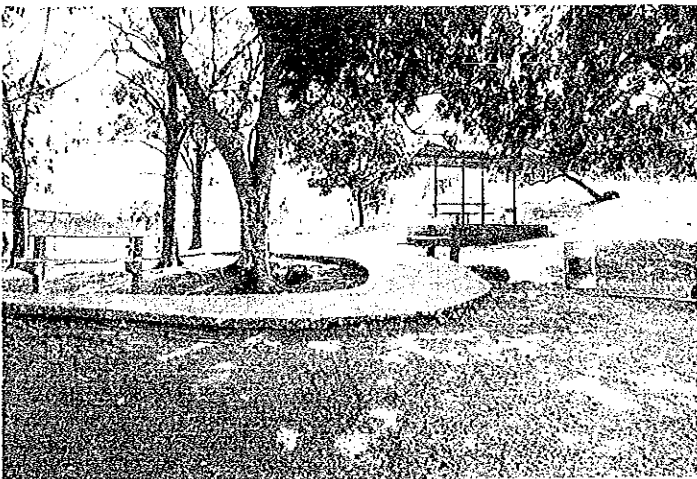
They did not know how to use the Japanese playground equipment (so-called JAPON here).



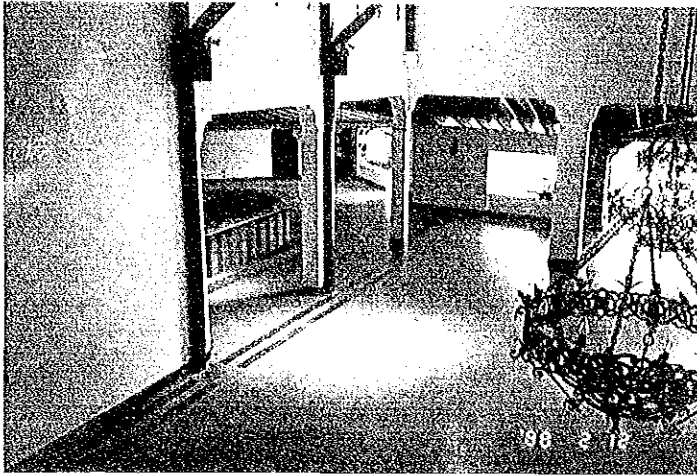
BMX track (off-road play by bicycle)



Soccer field



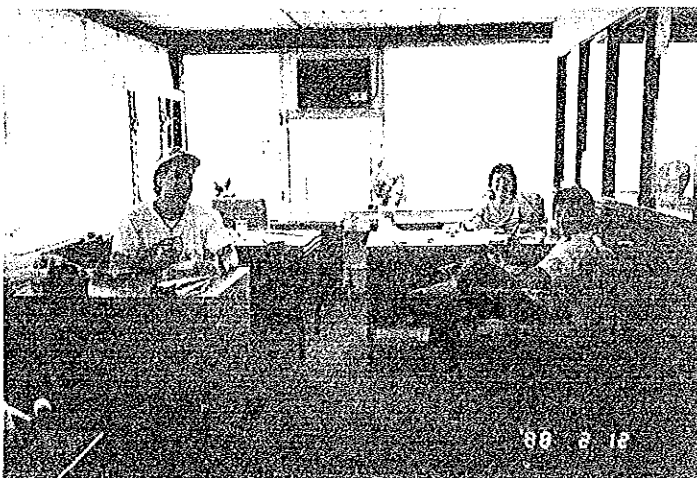
Rest house



Viewing toward the first floor lobby from the park general affairs office on the second floor.

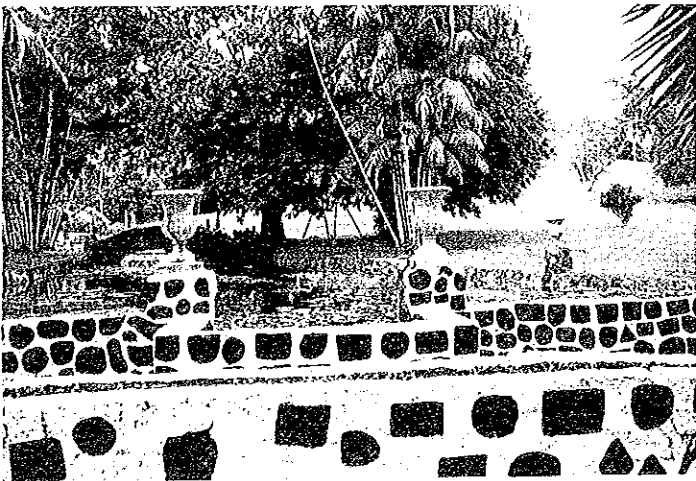


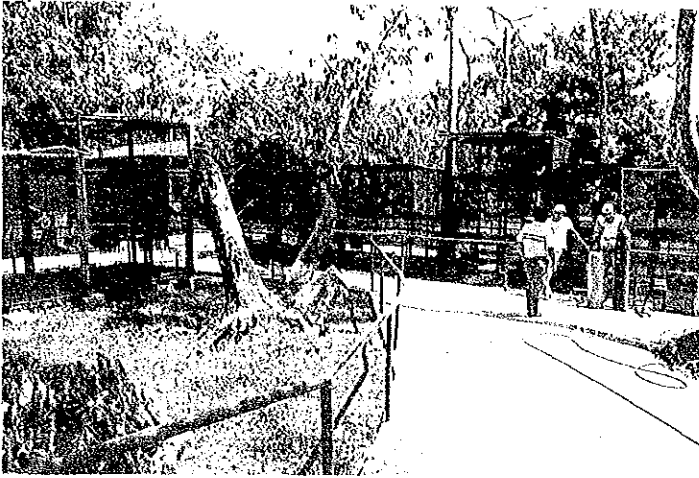
Omar Park management office



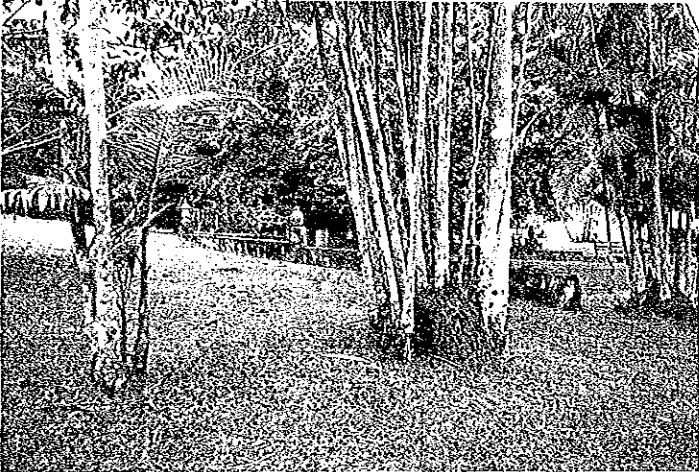
The park planning office

Summit Park





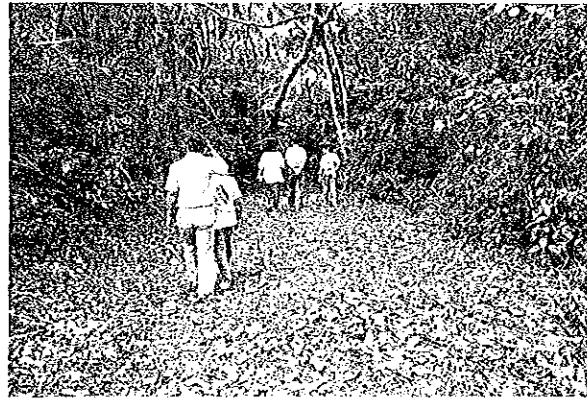
Small-scale zoological garden in Summit Park



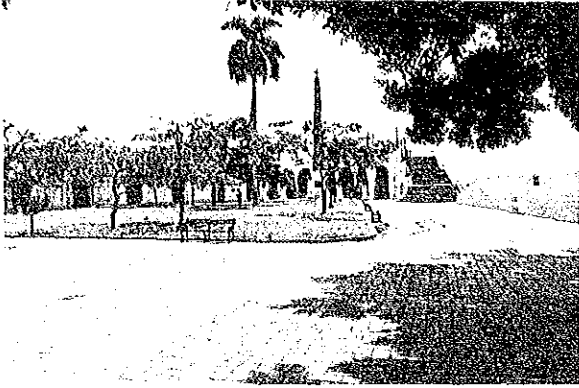
Soberania Natural Park



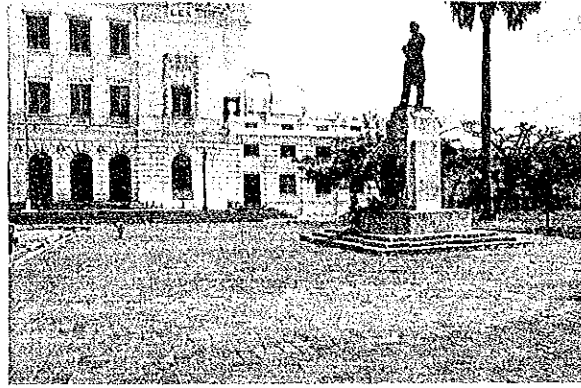
The trunk road passes through the natural park and the access from Panama City to the park is convenient.



The old Panama city

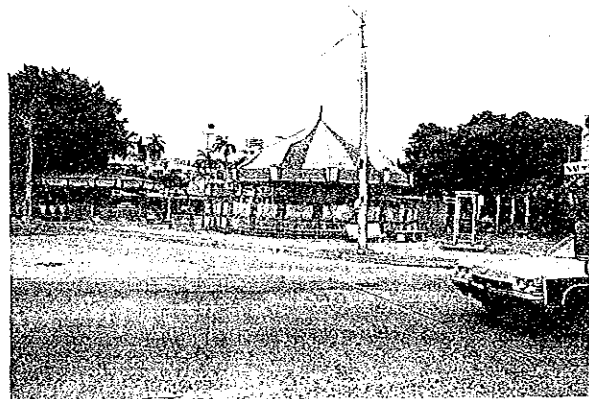
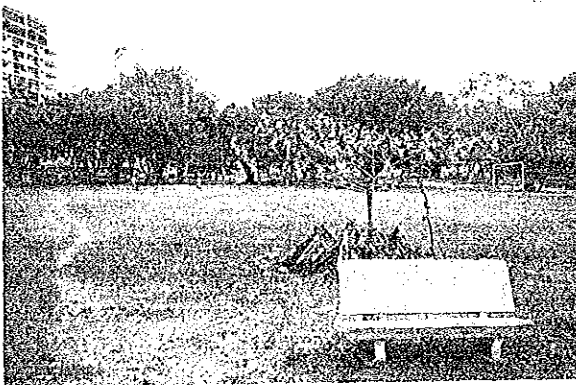


France Square



The statue of Lesseps built in France Square, French embassy is located in the neighbourhood.

One of the parks in Panama City



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