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Selangor objects reversal of ECRL alignment

The original ECRL line will interrupt the water catchment area in the state

by AFIQ AZIZ

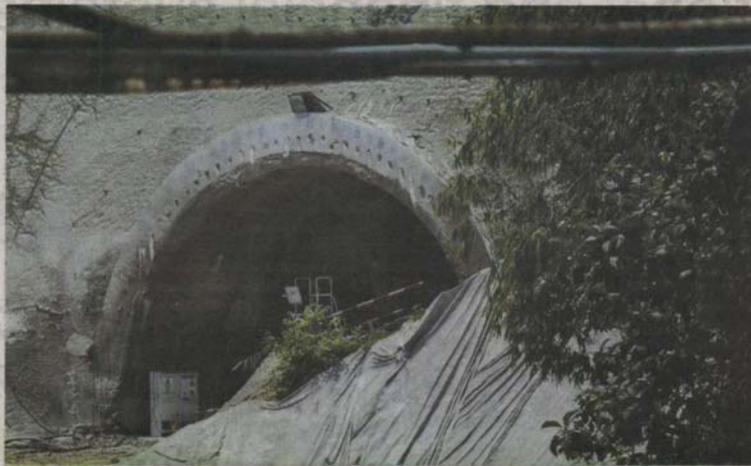
THE Selangor government is opposing the reversal of the East Coast Rail Link (ECRL) project's alignment, which will pass through Gombak, Kuala Lumpur and Serendah, Selangor.

Local Government, Public Transport and New Village Development executive councillor (exco) Ng Sze Han said this is because the original line will interrupt the water catchment area in the state.

"The original ECRL line covers the route near Permatang Kuarza (Gombak), Batu Dam, the forest reserve and Taman Rimba Templer in Kota Puteri or Batu Arang, which passes through the water catchment area.

"As such, Selangor has proposed a more strategic location in Jenjarom (Kuala Langat) near Rimbayu or Kampung Cheeding area, as well as in the Westport," he said at the Selangor State Assembly in Shah Alam yesterday.

Ng answered a question from Lau Weng San (Pakatan Harapan [PH]-Banting) regarding the latest status of the ECRL project in Selangor.



The changes being mooted are mainly in Section C of the project, which is the portion of the railway track in the Klang Valley which connects to Port Klang

The 690km-long ECRL project consists of three sections: Section A, which runs from Kota Baru in Kelantan to Dungun in Terengganu; Section B, from Dungun to Mentakab in Pahang; and Section C, straddling Mentakab to Port Klang in Selangor.

Earlier, the media reported that some parties had suggested that the ECRL route be returned to the original line decided by the Barisan

Nasional (BN) government before the 14th General Election.

The changes being mooted are mainly in Section C of the project, which is the portion of the railway track in the Klang Valley which connects to Port Klang.

The BN regime originally proposed for the line to pass through Temerloh and Bentong in Pahang, before entering Serendah, which will require tunnel-

ling works in Titiwangsa costing over RM8 billion.

Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wee Ka Siong said the recommendation to reverse the ECRL plan had come from Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Wan Rosdy Wan Ismail.

Besides Selangor, Negri Sembilan is also against the reversal, as the project could spur the economic impact to its surrounding areas,

particularly in Seremban.

Ng stated that if the Transport Ministry intended to continue the ECRL project with the original alignment plan, the economic impact of the previously proposed route should be resolved with a good solution.

Meanwhile, state exco for Environment, Green Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation and Consumer Affairs Hee Loy Sian said the latest status of forestry gazetting of the Forest Research Institute of Malaysia (FRIM) as a United Nations World Heritage Site for Education, Culture and Scientific Organisations (Unesco), is still in the nomination stage.

He said documents related to the nomination of FRIM were sent to Unesco on Jan 31, 2017.

"This document is a waiting list which needs to be sent to Unesco at least a year before the complete nomination dossier is sent," he said in response to a question from Elizabeth Wong Keat Ping (PH-Bukit Lanjan) regarding the latest update to FRIM's gazetting as a Unesco world heritage site.

He said work on the preparation of the nomination, including the submission of related documents, is being carried out by appointed experts.

He added that the nomination paper is expected to be sent to Unesco in 2022.