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ECRL good for national unity, never mind the cost, says fund manager



An old map of the ECRL route which will traverse Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang and Selangor.

PETALING JAYA: A global fund manager has extolled the East Coast Rail Link (ECRL) project as one that has the potential to unite people in different parts of Peninsular Malaysia.

Capital Dynamics Group managing director Tan Teng Boo said the ECRL's value went beyond ringgit and sen and the project must be seen from the perspective of national unity.

He noted that the east coast and the central region of the peninsula were at different rates of development and claimed that they were "moving in different directions".

"So how do you unite the country? Connectivity, accessibility. So the ECRL must be seen from a national unity point of view," Tan told FMT.

“If you connect the country, the dividing lines become blurred. Look at countries like Korea, Taiwan, Germany, France and China. They have excellent railway networks so people can move between regions easily.”

The 665km ECRL will traverse Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang and Selangor and be a land bridge between Kuantan Port and Port Klang, allowing ships to bypass Singapore.

Construction on the ECRL began in August 2017. It was suspended following the change of government in 2018, but construction resumed in 2019.

Tan criticised people who had politicised the project, saying they were “so focused on knocking” their political opponents that they failed to look at it from the perspective of national interest.

He said there was a need for Malaysia to have a good electric train network that would enable people to go from one region to another within hours.