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'No forest degazettement for ECRL land-clearing'

PROJECT EIA-APPROVED

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KUALA LUMPUR: Clearing of land for the East Coast Rail Link (ECRL) in Selangor will not involve degazetting forest reserves, including those in the Selangor State Park, said Malaysia Rail Link Sdn Bhd (MRL).

The ECRL project owner, in a statement yesterday, said the project had followed the approved Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), environmental management plan and erosion and sediment control plans, as well as conditions set by the Department of Environment (DoE) and Department of Irrigation and Drainage (DID).

"To facilitate preparatory works for the ECRL, MRL obtained a right-of-way permit from the Forestry Department so its contractors can enter the forest reserve to carry out licensed ECRL-related activities."

MRL was responding to recent

claims by a non-governmental organisation that land-clearing was found in four areas in the Selangor State Park.

MRL said the EIA, a mandatory requirement under the Environmental Quality Act 1974, was submitted to the DoE on Nov 30, 2021 and approved on Dec 20, 2021.

"The ECRL railway scheme for Section C2 (Gombak-Serendah-Port Klang) was granted by the Transport Ministry to MRL on Jan 14, last year, after a three-month public inspection per the statutory requirements of the Land Public Transport Act 2010.

"On Sept 14, last year, we received approval from the Selangor government to proceed with the construction of the ECRL Section C2 alignment in Selangor."

It added that the ECRL Section C2 construction, which is within Selangor, was carried out tactfully in consultation with local com-

munities and all stakeholders, and in accordance with regulatory requirements.

"For our ongoing project in Selangor, we are working closely with authorities and government agencies at all levels, including the federal government, the Selangor government, state Forestry Department, DoE, and local councils.

"In addition, MRL and China Communications Construction (ECRL) Sdn Bhd (CCC-ECRL) are proactively holding meetings and engagement sessions with state authorities and all stakeholders of the ECRL project, including local communities living near ECRL work sites."

The company said it was committed to fully complying with all requirements set out by the authorities to protect the environment and safeguard public interest. **Bernama**