

For Immediate Release

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PRESS STATEMENT BY MRL TO CLARIFY CERTAIN MISLEADING INFORMATION ON THE ECRL PROJECT

Malaysia Rail Link Sdn Bhd (MRL) wishes to clarify certain information related to the improved East Coast Rail Link (ECRL) project.

Misleading Information 1:

The new southern alignment will cause travel time on the ECRL from Kota Bharu to Kuala Lumpur to increase to 5-6 hours.

The travel time from Kota Bharu to Kuala Lumpur via the new southern alignment is in fact approximately 4 hours.

The distance from Kota Bharu to Putrajaya Sentral under the new Southern Alignment is 550km covering 17 stations. The distance from Kota Bharu to Gombak under the previous alignment was 525km covering 18 stations.

With a travel speed of 160km per hour, the additional 25km adds a time of less than 10 minutes to the journey, which will be further reduced due to the reduction of one stop.

With three existing train lines available at Putrajaya Sentral including MRT2, ERL and KTM services (Komuter & ETS), the options for passengers to branch out to Kuala Lumpur, KLIA and further north are more varied than what would have been available at ITT Gombak.

Misleading Information 2:

The joint Management, Operation and Maintenance (MOM) of the ECRL between Malaysia Rail Link Sdn Bhd (MRL) and China Communications Construction Company Ltd. (CCCC) is akin to Malaysia ceding 50% ownership in ECRL to CCCC. The joint MOM also poses a risk to national security.

We must distinguish between ownership and joint operations. The joint operations arrangement does not in any way whatsoever, involve ceding any form of ownership of the ECRL to CCCC. It is purely about the sharing of MOM costs plus the exchange of technical know-how and expertise between CCCC and MRL. The Government of Malaysia will own 100% of all ECRL assets through MRL, from the beginning to the end of the joint MOM arrangement.

The 50:50 joint-venture (JV) company between MRL and CCCC will not pose any threat to national security as the JV company will be under the management of Malaysia. The directors of the JV company and the appointment of the Chief Executive Officer will be at the discretion of the MRL.

Misleading Information 3:

The reduction in the project cost for the ECRL was due to the fact that the new alignment negates the need for the 18km tunnel passing through the Titiwangsa range and the fewer stations that will be built.

For Phases 1 & 2 of the original ECRL project, the entire cost including double tracking would have been RM65.5 billion. This would have included the purported “RM10 billion tunnel” (Genting Tunnel) through the Titiwangsa range. If we were to dispense the Genting Tunnel, the cost would still have been at RM55.5 billion.

The number of stations planned under the original ECRL project for Phases 1 & 2 was 24 stations (excluding Pengkalan Kubor and Wakaf Baru under the Northern Extension).

With the new alignment, the number of stations is now 20. The further reduction in cost from RM55.5 billion to RM44 billion would not have solely due to four stations being omitted.

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