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PM: We'll help complete ECRL project quickly

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim emphasised the need to quickly complete the East Coast Rail Link (ECRL) project.

He yesterday said the government would extend full cooperation to Malaysia Rail Link Sdn Bhd (MRL) and China Communications Construction Company Ltd (CCCC) to ensure timely execution of the project.

He said this at the groundbreaking of the ECRL Gombak Integrated Terminal station with Chinese Premier Li Qiang.

Anwar highlighted the importance of involving Malaysian and Bumiputera contractors, consultants and suppliers in the project.

"We will provide support to accelerate the progress and success of the ECRL."

The ceremony was attended by Transport Minister Anthony Loke, Chief Secretary to the Government and MRL chairman Tan Sri Mohd Zuki Ali, Chinese ambassador Ouyang Yujing, Malaysian ambassador to China Datuk Norman Muhamad and MRL chief executive officer Datuk Seri Darwis Abdul Razak.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan and Home Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail were also present.

Anwar addressed several concerns, particularly regarding operations and maintenance.

"Chief Secretary Zuki met CC-

CC and MRL to stress the importance of efficient planning for operations and maintenance to avoid disrupting progress."

He said the RM50 billion ECRL project signified Malaysia's commitment to equitable development, particularly in less competitive regions.

"ECRL will boost regional growth and showcase Malaysia-China collaboration in driving economic progress and development in less developed areas."

He expressed gratitude for efforts to accelerate the project, achieving milestones ahead of schedule.

"We are pleased to welcome Li Qiang and have had extensive discussions on trade, investments, infrastructure and more."

The groundbreaking marks the start of the final phase of the ECRL project, with the completion of the rail alignment from Kota Baru to the Gombak Integrated Terminal expected by December 2026.

The 665km ECRL, starting from Kota Baru and ending at Port Klang, will feature 20 stations, including 10 passenger-only stations and 10 combined passenger and freight stations.

The passenger train will reduce travel time, linking Kota Baru to Gombak in four hours compared with the seven-hour road journey. The segment between Gombak and Port Klang is expected to be completed by December 2027.