

Dr M clarifies ERCL deal not in exchange for Jho Low

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Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad has clarified that the East Coast Rail Link (ECRL) project deal was not inked with the condition that China returns fugitive businessperson Low Taek Jho.

“This has nothing to do with Low. But of course, we seek the Chinese government (with regard to Low),” he told a press conference in Putrajaya this morning.

However, Mahathir pointed out that Putrajaya did take advantage of the deal to press Beijing to import more palm oil.

On April 12, it was reported that the project would resume following the signing of a supplementary agreement between Malaysia Rail Link Sdn Bhd (MRL) and the China Communications Construction Company Ltd (CCCC).

Putrajaya managed to bring down the price tag to RM44 billion – RM21.5 billion less than the original cost of RM65.5 billion.

Previously, it was reported that Low, who is wanted in connection with the

1MDB scandal, is roaming freely in China.

Low has been charged in absentia in Malaysia over the scandal. It was reported, however, that the absence of an extradition treaty between Malaysia and China had complicated matters.

In January, Inspector-General of Police Mohamad Fuzi Harun said the police met Chinese authorities to locate Low.

A month later, Home Minister Muhyiddin Yassin said Putrajaya had yet to obtain cooperation from China in locating the fugitive.

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