

Stop-work order at Kiara Park
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KUALA LUMPUR: CALLS by non-governmental organisations for work on perimeter fencing at the Bukit Kiara Park to stop were finally answered yesterday.

Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Seri Chor Chee Heung said he had issued a stop-work order for the time being, even though some 80 per cent of the work had been completed.

"The National Landscape Department will cease all construction work until further agreement and engagement with the stakeholders.

"It will try to make good the damage that has been done to the area and revive it by planting patches of grass and plants.

"Whatever damage that was done, we must rectify it, one way or another. We must admit that there was not enough monitoring of the contractor in doing the perimeter fencing, so we will follow up very closely now."

Chor said this after a three-hour discussion with Friends of Bukit Kiara (FoBK), Malaysian Nature Society (MNS), Global Environmental Centre (GEC), Trails Association of Kuala Lumpur and Selangor, Taman Tun Dr Ismail Residents Association and Landskap Malaysia.

The MNS and GEC said during the construction, some 3,000 trees were cut through the forest, earthworks were done without provision, trails were damaged and potential tension cracks were spotted on hillslopes.

The 3.5m-high perimeter fence, stretching 4.7km, was for security and supervision.

Among those present were Landskap Malaysia chairman Tun Jeanne Abdullah, its adviser Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, ministry secretary-general Datuk Arpah Abdul Razak and department director-general Esa Ahmad.

Chor had also asked FoBK to write to City Hall on the issue of a buffer zone for the park as the authority does not fall under the ministry's jurisdiction.

On the gazettelement of the 188.9ha Bukit Kiara Park, Chor said the ministry was faced with the issue of land leased out to Measat Broadcast Network Systems Bhd and Bukit Kiara Equestrian and Country Resort.

In the case of the 24ha land leased out to Berjaya Equestrian Park, Chor said there was nothing that could be done because the court had given a judgment in their favour.

For Measat, which City Hall had leased land spanning 40.5ha, the ministry would work to take back the land by offering Measat another site.

"They have every right to be there because it was a proper lease, unless they give it up voluntarily. If they refuse to, we may proceed to gazette the land, minus the leased portions.

"Once we get back the land from Measat, we can add it on again. The ministry and the department are trying our best to gazette it as soon as possible," Chor said, adding that the NGOs would be consulted.

FoBK chairman Liew Khoi Cheng said he was glad with the decision to stop work at the park.

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