

Headline	FRIM objects to proposed development		
MediaTitle	The Star (Metro North)		
Date	08 Dec 2018	Color	Full Color
Section	News	Circulation	37,279
Page No	15	Readership	111,837
Language	English	ArticleSize	344 cm ²
Journalist	N/A	AdValue	RM 9,138
Frequency	Daily	PR Value	RM 27,414



FRIM objects to proposed development

THE Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) is also voicing out against the proposed degazettement and development at the Bukit Lagong Forest Reserve in Gombak.

Its official response was sent to the Selangor State Forestry Department.

"We have been contacted by the media and civil society since Nov 23 to make our stand on this issue.

Some of our visitors are accusing FRIM of being involved in the proposed degazettement.

"Some even thought that our decision to close off our Rover Track in 2016 was to make way for this," FRIM director-general Datuk Dr Abd Latif Mohmod said.

He said the proposed area for degazettement was located outside FRIM's jurisdiction, some 3.5km from the research institute's campus perimeters.

"Those living around the proposed area who feel unhappy with the degazettement should promptly send their objections officially to the state forestry department and not direct their frustration and anger towards FRIM," he said in a statement.

Abd Latif added that FRIM appreciated the public outcry over this issue as it reflected an increasing level of awareness among Malaysians on



The pristine water at Taman Rimba Bukit Lagong is a key attraction at the forest reserve and serves as an important water catchment area. — Filepic

the importance of forest and environment conservation.

He said he was particularly concerned that the proposed development might affect FRIM's chances of achieving the Unesco World Heritage Site (WHS) status, apart from opening the floodgate of demands for further degazettement of the forest reserve for development purposes.

FRIM's nomination for the Tentative List of the Unesco WHS was accepted

at the 41st World Heritage Committee Meeting held in Krakow, Poland, on July 7, 2017.

The Bukit Lagong Forest Reserve serves as a buffer for the conservation of the 544ha FRIM campus, which was gazetted under the National Heritage Act 2005 as a Natural Heritage in 2009 and declared as a National Heritage in 2012.

Among others, FRIM is of the view that the Bukit Lagong FR should

remain intact because:

*It is an important water catchment supplying water to the surrounding area;

* Development of this area, which is on a steep slope, will increase the risk of landslide and flood occurrences;

* The proposed development will also adversely affect the lives of the orang asli community living nearby.