



JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

CONCERNS REGARDING SALE OF ZOO NEGARA LAND LAND PREVIOUSLY ENTRUSTED FOR PUBLIC BENEFIT SOLD

15 October 2025, Petaling Jaya – Plots of land previously owned by the Malaysian Zoological Society, the organization entrusted with managing our Zoo Negara, have been quietly sold or had their ownership transferred over the past three to four years. Additionally, these parcels have had their land-use designation changed from “Private Sports and Recreational Facilities” to “Commercial” in the recently gazetted Ampang Jaya Local Plan 2035.

In light of these developments, we, the undersigned, call upon the Selangor State Authority and the Ampang Jaya Municipal Council (MPAJ) to provide full transparency regarding the changes in ownership and the reclassification of land-use for the affected lots.

The Zoo Negara, a proud icon at the national, state, and local levels, is situated in a prime location at Hulu Kelang, Selangor beside the Middle Ring Road 2. It is surrounded by lush greenery, traversed by two rivers, and bordered by environmentally sensitive areas. Any rash development in these zones without proper federal approval is not only unlawful—it also poses serious risks, including landslides, flooding, and other environmental disasters.

These plots of land, previously designated for public benefit and conservation, should have been protected through state intervention. Such action would have prevented the transfer of ownership and ensured that the National Zoo and its surrounding lands remain safeguarded for conservation efforts for generations to come.

The zoo is a vital national asset for conservation and education, drawing visitors from across Malaysia. Any erosion of its land base threatens not only wildlife preservation but also public access to **green spaces**—an irreplaceable resource for community well-being and environmental stewardship.

We, the undersigned, demand that:

1. The Selangor state government gives the rakyat full disclosure of the rationale behind the approval in allowing change of ownership of such lands designated for the use of Zoo Negara.
2. The Ampang Jaya Municipal Council gives a satisfactory explanation and rationale regarding the landuse change from “Private Sports and Recreational Facilities” to “Commercial”.

3. The Selangor state government gives the rakyat assurance that the remaining Zoo land will remain protected and land lots that have been sold and/or transferred be gazetted as “Open Space” with immediate effect.

These demands are based on the following concerns:

1. Legal issues

- Landuse maps in the gazetted RT MPAJ 2035 describe the land as “Commercial” and “Private Sports and Recreational Facilities.
- The restriction imposed which requires the consent of the State Authority for the transfers and sale of the land lots, but the propriety of this process is unclear and warrants further investigation and confirmation.
- Malaysia’s 10-year panda conservation agreement with China may be compromised by the land-use zoning discrepancies at Zoo Negara, exposing Malaysia to legal disputes, administrative delays, and reputational harm that undermine both international obligations and public trust in land governance.

2. Communities

- Indiscriminate sale of land and subsequent conversion of landuse in environmental and ecologically sensitive areas will have a direct impact on the safety of communities in the Hulu Kelang area which is highly susceptible to landslides and annual flooding.
- The area is also within the Gombak Hulu Langat Geopark which requires conservation of its natural terrain and sustainable development in neighbouring communities.

3. Conservation of Environmental Sensitive and Disaster Risk Areas.

- The land area of the lots sold measures 21.4322ha and could mean a potential loss of green space equivalent to 53.6 football fields if developed.
- The area is established as an environmentally sensitive area and disaster risk area for landslide. Development is limited to activities that will not disturb the topography and preserve the greenery in the area.

4. Biodiversity and ecosystem services

- Location of land lots is connected to the Ulu Gombak Forest Reserve and serves as an urban wildlife corridor, part of a wider urban wildlife network.
- The alienation of these open spaces will lead to potential risks for landslides and flooding.

Endorsed by:

1. AJ Rimba Collective
2. Global Environment Centre (GEC)
3. Sahabat Alam Malaysia - Friends of the Earth Malaysia
4. Environmental Protection Society Malaysia (EPSM)
5. Center to Combat Corruption and Cronyism (C4 Center)
6. RimbaWatch
7. Engineers Without Borders Malaysia
8. Sustainable Development Network Malaysia
9. Treat Every Environment Special (TrEES)
10. B.E.A.CC.H (Biodiversity. Environment. Agroecology. Climate Change. Habitats)
11. Agora Society Malaysia
12. Friends of Bukit Dinding
13. Friends of Bukit Kiara
14. Alliance of River Three! (ART!)
15. SUARAM

- END -

The AJ Rimba Collective is a collective initiative by residents of neighbourhoods bordering the hillside forest areas under the administration of the Ampang Jaya Municipal Council. Its members comprise individuals with expertise and experience in the fields of planning and environmental conservation.

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QUOTES BY PANELIST NGOS:



Randolph Jeremiah - Vice-President, Environmental Protection Society Malaysia

"This development invites a cascade of negative consequences. The removal of this forest will destroy a natural sponge, elevating the risk of flash flooding, as witnessed recently in the area. It will sever a critical wildlife corridor, permanently harm biodiversity, and eradicate an irreplaceable public amenity essential for community well-being".



Theivanai Amarthalingam, Legal Advisor, Sahabat Alam Malaysia - Friends of the Earth Malaysia

"This is a gross violation of the Town and Country Planning Act 1976 (TCPA 1976), which sets out the legal framework for proper planning control and regulation of town and country planning. It is unacceptable. Furthermore, this action disregards the clear pronouncement of the Federal Court in the landmark case of Perbadanan Pengurusan Sunrise Garden Condominium v Sunway City and 2 Ors [2023] MLRA 4. The Federal Court's decision underscores the importance of adhering to statutory requirements and upholding the integrity of planning laws, sending a strong message that compliance is not optional. Such blatant disregard for established legal standards undermines public trust and sets a dangerous precedent for future developments. This transfer and/or sale should not be condoned by the relevant authorities."