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Journalist	SHAFIQQUL ALIFF	AdValue	RM 7,592
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Pic by Muzhd Amin Nahanul

**PROTECTING NATURE:** Samsul Anak Senin, an Orang Asli resident and chairman of his village community management council, poses next to a massive tree near the Kampung Orang Asli Busut Baru in the Kuala Langat North forest reserve. A controversial plan by the Selangor govt to raze the forest reserve is opposed by indigenous Orang Asli community, environmentalists and lawmakers from both sides of the political divide. Samsul, whose village is located 50m from the forest, says the forest is a source of livelihood for them, as they roam and forage the land. SEE P 7

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## C4 Centre: Degazetting Kuala Langat forest reserve violates regulations

*The centre is backing the call for Selangor MB to come clean and explain the shocking decision to degazette KLNFR*

by SHAFIQQUL ALIFF

**THE** Centre to Combat Corruption and Cronyism (C4 Centre) is backing the call for Selangor Menteri Besar (MB) Datuk Seri Amirudin Shari to come clean and explain the shocking decision to degazette the Kuala Langat North Forest Reserve (KLNFR) and destroy 536.7ha of one of the last remaining peat swamp forests in southern Selangor.

In a statement yesterday, C4 Centre said the degazetting by the state clearly violates regulations, guidelines, plan documents as well as Malaysia's commitments under existing international treaties such as the Paris Agreement on climate change and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The centre has joined the public outcry over the decision done in secret and hidden for three months



An Orang Asli resident Samsul Anak Senin, whose village is located 50m from the forest reserve, says the forest is a source of livelihood for the indigenous community as they roam and forage the land

before it was announced.

"With the lack of transparency and accountability, the public is left to suspect the interference of 'higher powers' in the degazetting of the KLNFR, even as the MB himself admitted the presence of external influence in illicit dealings in the state.

"If the benefits of development

outweigh the costs of degazetting, why are the technical reports not made available to allay public fears?

"This is a clear case of privatising profits and socialising costs. We demand answers on the real hidden hands behind this venture," C4 Centre said.

Recently, Selangor Exco for Envi-

ronment Hee Loy Sian revealed that there were no objections by the Environment Department, Forestry Department, Drainage and Irrigation Department, Wildlife and National Parks Department, Orang Asli Development Department and the Dean of Faculty of Forestry and Environment of Universiti Putra Malaysia, among others, during

technical meetings.

Meanwhile, several parliamentary representatives have also voiced their objections to degazette the KLNFR and had received more than 170,000 objections to a last-minute town hall session.

Umno information chief Shahril Hamdan suggested that a final and drastic step to be taken by the federal government.

He said the government may consider using the provisions of Article 83 of the Federal Constitution to take ownership of areas that have been demolished from the state government, before the state transfers them to any company or entity.

"I am aware that the proposal is aggressive and has to be the last resort if all other efforts fail.

"It should not be the responsibility of the federal government to correct the failures and greed of the state, but KLNFR is a valuable asset for both the heritage and the future," he said.

Shahril stressed that if the MB does not take heed of the public outcry, then a firm move must be taken to save the situation.