

YTL, Naza join fray for HSR project

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PETALING JAYA: Two more joint ventures (JVs) involving local companies have joined the fray to bid for the job of project delivery partner (PDP) to oversee the civil works portion of the Kuala Lumpur-Singapore high-speed rail (HSR) project.

Sources said the YTL group has teamed up with the SIPP group to bid for the job of PDP, while the other JV that has thrown in its hat is the one between Naza Group and China Communications Construction Co Ltd (CCCC).

At the moment, there are two JV companies comprising established names in the construction industry that are already bidding for the PDP job of the HSR.

They are Gamuda Bhd-Malaysian Resources Corp  Bhd (MRCB) and a four-party consortium comprising IJM Corp Bhd-Sunway Construction Group Bhd  (SunCon)-Jalinan Rejang Sdn Bhd-Maltimur Resources Sdn Bhd.

“At a glance, the fight for the PDP job for the civil works portion is essentially between Gamuda-MRCB and IJM-SunCon-Jalanan-Malimur. However, there is an outside chance of YTL pulling off an upset largely due to its partner’s influential presence in Johor,” said a consultant.

The SIPP group, which has the backing of the Johor Palace, has bagged a few federal government-sponsored projects in the state following its partnership with the YTL group. Among them is the RM9bil Gemas-Johor Baru double-track project and a 1,440-megawatt power plant.

The tender for the PDP job to oversee the civil works portion of the HSR project opened in November. It was supposed to close at the end of January.

However, it has been extended by another two weeks until Feb 14 at the request of some of the bidders and changes to the scope of work.

“The extension was given to allow more time for the prospective bidders to team up with international consulting firms that are specialised in HSR projects,” said a source.

Industry executives said that the extension of the closing date by two weeks indicates that the government wants to see that all parties have ample time to put in their best bids.

The HSR is the most prestigious infrastructure project for the government. The civil works portion itself is estimated at RM35bil and the PDP gets as much as 5% in fees if it is able to ensure that the job is done within the timeframe and within cost.

Among the criteria for prospective bidders is that they must have managed projects as a PDP, with railway-related work experience and HSR expertise. With regards to the HSR expertise, the companies can team up with a foreign consultant.

Towards this end, it is learnt that Gamuda-MRCB is said to have roped in Systra of France as its railway specialist consultant.

Systra is well-known in the field of HSR works and is also one of the civil reference design consultants for MyHSR Corp to guide it on the HSR works from Bandar Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur up to the Selangor-Negri Sembilan border.

The IJM-Suncon-Maltimur-Jalanan consortium has teamed with Italferr of Italy, which also has a strong technical record in HSR projects. Italferr is a consultant for many HSR jobs in and outside Italy, including Eastern Europe.

YTL-SIPP is believed to have teamed up with AECOM, which like Systra, is one of the civil reference design consultants employed by MyHSR.

AECOM's work for MyHSR is to provide advice for the civil design works for the stretch between Iskandar Puteri Station in Johor and up to the border between Malaysia and Singapore.

However, the HSR specialist for the Naza-CCCC consortium is not known.

The Gamuda-MRCB JV and the IJM-SunCon-Maltimur-Jalanan consortium have the necessary track record as PDP, as they have undertaken large jobs.


Gamuda-MRCB has undertaken PDP jobs for the mass rapid transit and light rail transit (LRT) projects.

As for IJM and SunCon, both are strong contractors and complemented by Maltimur Resources and Jalanan Rejang, which were the PDP for the Pan-Borneo Highway.

YTL-SIPP and Naza-CCCC are not known to have a track record on undertaking work as PDP. However, YTL is undertaking the Gemas-Johor Baru double-track job.

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It lost out to the JV of [George Kent \(M\) Bhd](#)  and MRCB. However, its partner CCCC is the prime mover for the RM54bil East Coast Rail Link project.

Note: This article first appeared in StarBiz Premium.