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Engineering study on Trans Asia rail

AN on-going engineering study for the proposed construction of the trans-Asia railway line from Singapore to Kunming in China is expected to be completed next month.

Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik told the House that Malaysia, which had been appointed the project's coordinator, did not have to spend extra as all its railway lines were complete.

To date, the Malaysian Government has allocated RM2 million and a private consortium RM3 million for feasibility studies.

KTM Berhad had also been appointed project managers, while KL Consult from Malaysia had been appointed head consultant by the consortium of consultants.

Dr Ling was replying to a question from Lim Siang Chai (BN-Petaling Jaya Selatan) who asked whether the proposed railway would be postponed due to economic problems.

Dr Ling said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had suggested the implementation of the project and it was unanimously agreed by Asean heads at a meeting in Bangkok in 1995.

Dr Ling said the estimated cost for the entire project could only be given once the engineering study, which would study the area's terrain and minimum standards required, was completed.

To a supplementary question by Wan Mohamed Jamin Mohd Mahmood (Pas-Tumpat), Dr Ling said the proposed project covered all Asean countries.

He said Asean may invite consortiums to undertake the project with expertise from China, Japan and South Korea. American and European companies may be invited to join the consortium.

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