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(The Yeoh brothers were ...)

Joanna Sze

13. Tan Sri Francis Yeoh Sock Ping, 47
Managing director, YTL Corporation Bhd
RM431 million

15. Datuk Yeoh Seok Kian, 45
Deputy managing director, YTL Corporation Bhd
RM402 million

16. Datuk Yeoh Seok Hong, 43
Director, YTL Corporation Bhd
RM402 million

17. Datuk Michael Yeoh Sock Siong, 42
Director, YTL Corporation Bhd
RM402 million

18. Datuk Mark Yeoh
Seok Kah, 37
Director, YTL Corporation Bhd
RM402 million

THE Yeoh brothers were included in the Top 40 richest Malaysians list by virtue of their 12.28 per cent share each in the family holding company YTL & Sons Holdings Sdn Bhd and their direct stakes in YTL Corporation Bhd. (The sisters, due to a smaller 3.05 per cent stake in YTL & Sons, do not make the list.)

The third generation of Yeohs continues the family tradition of being in the construction line. As children, they were often brought on 'sightseeing' tours of the company's construction sites and given informal management lessons on how to deal with workers and suppliers.

Today, all seven sit on YTL Corp's board of directors, with Francis Yeoh as managing director and Seok Kian as deputy managing director. The others are Seok Hong, Michael Yeoh and Mark Yeoh.

Under Francis, who took over the company at age 25 in the late 1970s, the YTL Group has diversified into a conglomerate of four listed companies, with one more on its way to Mesdaq.

Forward-looking, YTL Corp diversified into the cement and power sector, being the first independent power producer in the country. The group also has numerous investments overseas.

Francis is known as a charismatic businessman with the 'know-how and the know-who'. A British-trained engineer (all the brothers are engineers by training except Mark, who's a lawyer), he is hands-on in his management style, a visionary who is unafraid to try new things - the Barn Thai restaurant in Langkawi, the Eastern & Oriental luxury train, Bintang Walk, and the latest project, the Express Rail Link.

Seok Kian is a fellow of the Faculty of Building, United Kingdom, council member of the Master Builders Association of Malaysia and a graduate member of both the Chartered Institute of Building (UK) and the Australian Institute of Buildings.

Seok Hong is responsible for the group's construction arm. His portfolio in Kuala Lumpur includes the Citibank Headquarters, the Apera-ULG building, and the UMBC Tower Annexe.

Michael heads the group's manufacturing division, while Mark heads the hotels and resorts arm.

Critics have attributed YTL Corp's success to Francis' close ties with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, something he (Francis) is

often quick to deny.

`Many people still think YTL's success hinges on the PM,' he once told a foreign magazine. `That's not fair to the man or to the company.'

(END)