

Key tender for KL-Singapore HSR draws strong global interest
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SINGAPORE, July 6 — An industry briefing held yesterday for firms interested in bidding for a key tender for the Kuala Lumpur-Singapore High-Speed Rail (HSR) drew almost 400 participants from 165 international and local organisations, reflecting the keen interest in the mega project.

The tender, which will be called by the end of the year, is for the contract to become the assets company (AssetsCo) for the HSR project, which targets a rollout date of 2026 for the rail service.

The bulk of the firms came from the 67 entities in Europe, followed by 29 from Malaysia, 25 from Singapore, and 21 from other parts of Asia. The rest were from North America and Australia. Among them are six Singapore firms that intend to team up and partner with international players, to jointly participate in the HSR project. They are Clifford Capital, DBS Bank, Sembcorp Design and Construction, SMRT International, Surbana Jurong and Singapore Technologies Electronics.

Japanese parties which were present on Wednesday to indicate their interest in bidding for the contract included a consortium comprising Japan Rail, Japan Bank for International Cooperation and NEC Japan. It had been previously reported that Hong Kong's MTR Corporation was also interested in partnering with China Railway Corporation to bid for a contract.

Those present at the briefing included suppliers and integrators of rolling stock and system, network operators, engineering and legal consultants, financiers and investors, operators and construction companies.

Land Transport Authority (LTA) chief executive Ngien Hoon Ping said they were pleased with the "strong interest" from companies all over the world to attend the briefing.

The briefing, jointly conducted by MyHSR Corporation, which is owned by the Malaysian Ministry of Finance, and the LTA, was to inform participants of the parameters for the upcoming AssetsCo tender, procurement processes, among other things.

The AssetsCo will be responsible for designing, building, financing and maintaining all rolling stock and all rail assets, such as the track-work, power, signalling and telecommunication systems.

It will also develop and implement a network code to coordinate the system's network capacity for operations and maintenance needs.

At the briefing, participants were told about the key features of the project, such as how a double-track line is to be constructed between the two cities. The line is designed to accommodate all types of conventional high-speed rail trains and technology available and with a design speed of 350kmh.

Interested bidders will also have to meet the procurement objectives of the tender, such as a safe and secure HSR system. They will also need to come up with a HSR design that is inclusive and accessible, among other things.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the briefing, Sembcorp Design and Construction CEO Yam Ah Mee noted that the briefing had focused on the safety, reliability and universal design of the HSR project, which “are very much aligned with the capabilities, the experience” of the six-member Singapore partnership.

When completed, the 350km line will cut land travel time between Singapore and Kuala Lumpur to to 90 minutes, compared with a near five-hour drive under normal traffic condition. — TODAY

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