

6,000 jobs planned

MMC-Gamuda to give out 100 sub-contracts worth RM2b for double-tracking project

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PETALING JAYA: MMC-Gamuda Joint Venture Sdn Bhd plans to employ 6,000 more new workers and give out the remaining 100 sub-contracts worth RM2bil this year as works on the 329 km electrified double-tracking railway project connecting Ipoh and Padang Besar hit full throttle.

"We are on track to complete the whole project on time and on budget," company director Datuk Azmi Mat Nor told reporters at a briefing yesterday.

Gamuda had, in December last year, said the project might be delayed due to a land acquisition snag in Penang.

The rail line will snake through four states - Perak, Penang, Kedah and Perlis.

"Of course there will be issues arising from a project of this scale, but everything is manageable," Azmi said, adding that the four states were giving their full cooperation in all areas involving the construction of the double-tracking railway project.

The MMC-Gamuda joint venture was given the go-ahead by the Government to proceed at a cost of RM12.485bil, after it was previously shelved. Works began on Jan 8, 2008 and the project is targeted for completion by Jan 7, 2013.

Azmi said work progress had reached 21.33% to date, with costs reaching some RM2.9bil.

"Over the past 14 months, the project has

created a huge multiplier effect in the local economy in terms of employment and other business activities in the four states," he said.

The project currently provided direct employment for 7,000 people, of whom 90% were locals, Azmi said, adding that at the peak of construction activity, MMC-Gamuda expected to employ 13,000 people in various fields of work.

So far, 400 sub-contracts related to the project had been awarded, which had benefited more than 1,600 contractors, he said.

The economic spinoff from the whole project is estimated at RM15bil across four states, according to Azmi.

In terms of raw materials, the project has used some RM3bil of concrete products, quarry materials, steel as well as various machinery.

The management indicated that raw material prices had stabilised in the past few months, which would help the joint venture contain project costs.

Azmi said the project, when completed, would be a major enhancement to the country's transport infrastructure.

At present, the use of trains as a mode of transport in Malaysia stands at a low 3%, compared with 30% in developed countries. Road transportation is the most preferred method in Malaysia, with an 89% market share.



Datuk Azmi Mat Nor (right) and director Datuk Mohd Nor Idrus at the briefing