

Track to growth for small Bumi builders

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SMALL Bumiputera contractors in northern part of Peninsular Malaysia are experiencing growth because of the Ipoh-Padang Besar electrified double-tracking project (EDTP).

MMC-Gamuda JV, the main contractor for the RM12.5 billion EDTP, has been awarding contracts worth between RM100,000 and RM90 million to class A to E contractors since the end of 2008.

Kamalbina Group, one of the Bumiputera contractors awarded contracts worth around RM8 million, is diversifying its operations.

The Taiping-based construction and property developer is now operating resorts and has a concrete manufacturing plant.

Founder Datuk Kamarul-

bahrain Zainuddin said local contractors, developers, suppliers and hoteliers have been benefiting from the EDTP spillover.

He said demand for raw materials and new housing has been improving while rental rates and hotel occupancy have increased.

"While the contracts were small, we learnt a lot from the EDTP like safety and management skills. I may bid for more jobs according to my capacity and look into other businesses," he said in an interview with Business Times in Taiping recently.

"I hope contracts awarded for the EDTP will be fairly distributed so that more locals can gain and expand their businesses," he said.

Nazarin (NBM) Sdn Bhd managing director Mohd Ar-

iffin Abd Talib said he was given two contracts for road over bridge works worth RM38 million in Semanggol and Bukit Mertajam in Penang.

The Taiping firm is expected to get three more contracts for similar works in Butterworth, Taiping and Sg Siput, worth around RM20 million.

Zaaz Utara Enterprise, an Alor Star class E contractor, has a few contracts worth a combine RM1.6 million awarded since November 2009.

"Although my contracts are small, the experience gained is a lot more. My company is growing and I am working to be a class A contractor soon," said its founder Abdul Razak Din.