

# Request for Info launched for KL-S'pore High-Speed Rail project

**Industry's views being sought on how the project can be structured commercially**

**By Samuel Ee**  
samuelee@sph.com.sg

## **Singapore**

SINGAPORE and Malaysia on Wednesday launched a Request for Information (RFI) exercise to gather the industry's views on how to structure the Kuala Lumpur-Singapore High-Speed Rail (HSR) project commercially.

A joint statement by Singapore's Coordinating Minister for Infrastructure and Minister for Transport Khaw Boon Wan and Malaysia's Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Abdul Wahid Omar said: "This mar-

ket-sounding exercise marks a major milestone in our HSR journey.

"It is important for us to be properly informed of the industry's views. We want to use this exercise to gauge market interest in the project and solicit views on different models and approaches."

The RFI exercise, expected to conclude by year-end, is being undertaken by Singapore's Land Transport Authority (LTA) and Malaysia's Land Public Transport Commission (SPAD), and marks the next phase of the HSR project announced by Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak in February 2013.

The feedback received through the exercise will inform the ongoing bilateral discussions and formal tender process subsequently.

In a blog post entitled "Still on track to reach KL in 90 minutes", Mr Khaw described the HSR as "a game changer for both countries and our people".

"This is the most important bilateral cooperation project and can be exemplary for regional cooperation. I am honoured to co-chair the ministerial committee with Malaysian Minister Wahid to oversee the project," he wrote, adding that they will ensure it maintains "a steady pace of progress".

Writing that the project must meet the market test to be "sustainable and exemplary", he added: "We know the potential that HSR can bring. It can catalyse economic growth, unlock new opportunities and transform the way our peoples and businesses interact."

He noted, however, that countries have failed to fulfil their aspirations of having a HSR or have run into seri-

ous financial problems because of the size and complexity of this type of infrastructure project.

"A common reason is the gulf between the government's ambitions and the market reality," he suggested; this market-sensing exercise "is intended to close that gulf".

He noted that the Ministry of National Development has seen the benefits of conducting market sensing before implementing large-scale projects, such as the development of the integrated resorts at Marina Bay and Sentosa.

Mr Khaw was previously the minister for national development.

"The journey ahead remains long," he concluded. "But we are putting in place the necessary building blocks. The RFI today is one such building block. We look forward to the market response."