

Headline	Five companies awarded major solar projects		
MediaTitle	The Malaysian Reserve		
Date	16 Jul 2020	Language	English
Circulation	12,000	Readership	36,000
Section	Corporate Malaysia	Page No	5
ArticleSize	442 cm ²	Journalist	ALIFAH ZAINUDDIN
PR Value	RM 13,923		



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FIVE bidders who were shortlisted for the third Large Scale Solar (LSS3) scheme last year have won tenders to provide 500MW of solar-powered electricity, amid changes in government and disruptions caused by the coronavirus outbreak.

Energy and Natural Resources Minister Datuk Dr Shamsul Anuar Nasarah said all five bidders have signed the power purchase agreement (PPA) with national utility giant Tenaga Nasional Bhd (TNB), although the execution of the projects has been pushed back due to the Movement Control Order (MCO).

The winning bidders are expected to reach a financial close before the end of the year, Shamsul Anuar told the Dewan Rakyat in response to a question by Yeo Bee Yin (Pakatan Harapan-Bakri), the



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former Energy, Science, Technology, Environment and Climate Change minister.

Competitive bidding for the LSS3, which comprises projects worth an estimated RM2 billion, ended in August last year with the outcome expected by year-end.

Shamsul Anuar said the winners were made up of consortiums involving partnerships with firms

in Germany, France, Spain and Singapore.

Local companies named for the LSS3 are Coara Solar Sdn Bhd, Cypark Resources Bhd, Impian Bumiria Sdn Bhd, TTL Energy Sdn Bhd, Konsortium Besei Jaya Sdn Bhd and JKH Renewables Sdn Bhd.

It was previously reported that four of the bidders had proposed to construct for 100MW facilities,

while the fifth involved a 90MW project, making the exercise slightly undersubscribed.

Two of the 100MW projects are set to be developed in Marang, Terengganu. The third 100MW facility is planned in Kerian, Perak, while the fourth in Pekan, Pahang. The 90MW project is plotted in Kuala Muda, Kedah.

The Energy Commission is also

in the middle of a competitive bidding process for LSS@MenTARI (Malaysia Electricity Industry to Attract Renewable Energy Investment). The quota offered is 1,000MW — the biggest under the LSS scheme with costs estimated at RM4 billion.

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Bids are open to fully owned local companies or public-listed companies on Bursa Malaysia with at least 75% local shareholding.

Shamsul Anuar said the move was aimed to revive and stimulate Malaysia's economy which has been severely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

He said the ministry expects the LSS@MenTARI programme to generate 12,000 job opportunities as 1MW of solar can create 12 jobs.

The minister also hopes that the fall in solar panel prices will see competitive offers being made for LSS@MenTARI. Power plants under the scheme are expected to begin operations by Dec 31, 2023, as each plant would take up to 18 months to develop.