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## Germany tours GCC to seek contracts for railroad project

*Friday, 15 Jan, 2010*

It is reported that Mr Guido Westerwelle foreign minister of German headed to Saudi Arabia on the second leg of 4 nation tour that will also take him to Qatar and the UAE.

As per report, the German minister's GCC tour is part of efforts to secure contracts for the multi billion dollar railroad project that will link the six GCC states.

Westerwelle will hold talks with his Saudi counterpart Prince Saud Al Faisal. Their talks will focus on topics such as strengthening bilateral economic cooperation, fighting terrorism and promoting efforts to revive the Middle East peace process. The main item on the agenda for Westerwelle's GCC tour is the ambitious Gulf railway project.

According to a source at the German embassy in Riyadh, Westerwelle will hold talks with the outgoing Mr Abdul Rahman Al Attiyah secretary general of GCC about gaining a foothold in the project.

Talks will also focus on enhancing cooperation between Germany and the GCC states. The GCC, in cooperation with the World Bank is currently holding economic feasibility studies to link the member countries with the multi billion dollar rail project.

The report said that Qatar signed USD 25 billion rail project contract with Germany's Deutsche Bahn last November to build rail and underground lines in Qatar and Bahrain. For Qatar's capital Doha, Deutsche Bahn will design and build 4 line metro systems with 98 stations.

A high speed rail line to neighboring Bahrain is also planned, on which trains will reach speeds of 350 kilometers per hour. The project is a JV between Qatari Diar, the real estate arm of the nation's sovereign wealth fund with 51% and Deutsche Bahn with 49% to execute the integrated network.

(Sourced from Gulf News)

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