

Award integrated immigration project via open tender, government urged

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's integrated immigration project should be offered via an open tender to ensure that the government gets the most competitive price, says a senior economist.

Putra Business School business development manager associate professor Dr Ahmed Razman Abdul Latiff said the government should consider other options, instead of relying on the proposal from a party.

Razman was responding to news that Retirement Fund Inc (KWAP) was seeking to revive Prestariang Bhd's RM3.5 billion

national immigration control system (SKIN) project by offering to lower the cost to the government.

"If it so happens that Prestariang manages to secure this project under this tender system, it is up to KWAP to raise its shareholding in anticipation of higher return of its investment.

"(However) the government should be allowed to consider other options from other information technology firms as well," he said yesterday.

On Wednesday, Bloomberg reported that KWAP had proposed

to cut the cost of the project by 17 per cent to RM2.89 billion and increase its stake in Prestariang if the project was revived.

The report said the state pension fund had sold 12.6 million of its Prestariang shares since SKIN's cancellation was announced on December 12 last year, lowering its holding to 5.27 per cent from 7.82 per cent.

A representative for KWAP has



Dr Ahmed Razman Abdul Latiff

declined to comment on the matter.

In December last year, Home Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin announced that the Cabinet had agreed to scrap the project.

SKIN, to be implemented in 2021, is a border protection control system proposed by Prestariang

to replace the existing Malaysian Immigration System (myIMMs).

Prestariang, which has a 70 per cent stake in the project, had roped in French defence, technology and security firm, Thales Communications & Security SAS, whereby its Malaysian unit Thales Malaysia Sdn Bhd would carry out the project.

In July 2017, Prestariang through its subsidiary, Prestariang Skin Sdn Bhd, signed a concession agreement for 15 years with the Home Ministry to replace myMIMs.

Prestariang shares closed 22.7 per cent higher yesterday at 54 sen from 44 sen. **Farah Adilla**