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“Julius Berger has the Capacity to Deliver Abuja-Kaduna-Zaria-Kano Road” - FG

The Minister of Works, Engr. David Umahi at the weekend declared Federal Government’s determination to complete the busy Abuja-Kaduna-Zaria-Kano Road. According to him, the contractor, Julius Berger Nigeria Plc is the most competent to do the job in the country.

Umahi said this when he and the Minister of Finance/Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Mr. Wale Edun inspected parts of the Abuja-Kaduna section of the dual carriageway. While explaining that the government and the contractor, Julius Berger have agreed to complete at least 15 kilometres stretch of the road every month for the next 24 months, the Works Minister said, **“we have discussed with Julius Berger, and we have come up with a faster construction method that will not just deliver 15km but deliver up to 20km per month. That is what we assure Nigerians. It is only Julius Berger that can do it. With assured financing from the Minister of Finance, they are going to do it. We have got a commitment from the Honourable Minister of Finance to make payment, and I am very sure if we pay Julius Berger according to the commitment on funding, they will complete the job.”**

Umahi who further commended Julius Berger for the palliative works it did on the road said, **“some people sent messages commending the Ministry of Works for the palliative done on the road. I want to thank them (Berger). They have done quite well. There are just two spots that they need to give some attention, and we will be happy while the job is going on”**, Umahi said.

The Minister of Works further added: **“...initially when we started, Julius Berger had four sections working but we ran into hitches due to funding. Now the finance minister has assured us of adequate funding, so we agreed that they are going to go back to four sections.... By four sections, we are looking at the completion of 15 kilometres of road every month... 24 months to finish the project. We are assured of financing by the minister and the contractors have reassured that they are going to come back. We therefore assure that funding would not be a problem.”**

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Giving more insight into the project, Umahi said from Abuja to Kaduna was 165km out of which 45km had been done. ***“From Kaduna to Zaria is completed. We have only 20 kilometres between Zaria and Kano, and then we have 40 or 38 kilometres from zero point”***, he said, adding that, President Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu had expressed his deep concern on the completion of the road project, and thus directed that ***“everything must be done to get the entire project completed.”***

In assuring the Works Minister of government’s determination to complete the project on schedule, the Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the economy, Wale Edun specifically assured the works minister and the contractor of government’s willingness to fund the project.

“We are here to examine and to hear from the contractors, and to get their commitment, encourage and support them so as to complete this all-important reconstruction of the Abuja-Kaduna-Zaria-Kano Road. They have done over 40 kilometres on this side; we want to urge them to do more. Infrastructure is a critical priority of the administration of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu,” Edun said. He further explained that the government intends to raise the money for the project, as well as for other road projects across the country from different sources of finance.

In his remarks, the Managing Director of Julius Berger Nigeria Plc, Engr. Dr Lars Richter thanked the Federal Government for the inspection and assured that the all-important road will be completed on schedule. While giving a narration on the section-by-section progress on the works, he said, ***“...we are fully committed and ready to implement our acclaimed historical high quality and standards, which remains the Julius Berger signature of excellence in contract management and project delivery. We are already on it and given the funding assurances we are getting from our client; we shall give you quality delivery in each section of the road as we make progress towards the complete project delivery date.”***

Accompanying the Ministers of Works and Finance on the inspection were directors from both Ministries, Julius Berger’s Managing Director, Engr. Dr Lars Richter who conducted the two ministers round the project, and several other stakeholders.

The Julius Berger team that accompanied the Managing Director Dr Lars Richter are, Executive Project Director, Mr. Benjamin Bott, Engr. Yusuf Ibrahim, Mr. Sebastian Schiffner, as well as the Head of

Corporate Communications, Mr. James Agama, and Mr. Emmanuel Isibor who is the Acting Head of the company's Media Relations Department.