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Ircon International to bid for Zojila tunnel project

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Ircon International, which carries out a number of construction and infrastructure development projects, will bid for the Zojila tunnel project in Kashmir, according to top officials of the company. The government has invited fresh bids for the project after the exit of IL&FS Transportation Networks Ltd.

Ircon International expects an order book of ₹10,000 crore this fiscal. Optimistic about bagging the challenging Kashmir project, SK Chaudhary, CMD, Ircon International, told *BusinessLine*: "We are the only player that has made a 12-km long tunnel in the Himalayas, where trains run."

Asked about the preparation that Ircon International will have to undertake for the Zojila tunnel project in the Himalayan region, Choudhary said, "Generally, when we plan camps for workers of such projects, we ensure they are centrally heated. Here, the temperature drops up to -40 degrees Celsius. We are planning to have our own helicopter for emergencies. We will wetlease it," added Choudhary.

Implementing such a project will require huge invest-

ments, he said. Construction work will be done only for six months in a year.

The strength of Ircon International is its personnel, most of who are engineers. It has 1,200 regular employees and 400 on contract, who are new engineers. "Most of the staff, barring about 300-350, are engineers," he added, stressing that Ircon International is a "specialised construction" firm.

"We also have a lot of foreign projects, for which we don't depend on contract staff and we don't hire locally. We are the only firm that has always completed all projects," Mukesh Kumar Singh, Director-Finance, Ircon International, said.

Ircon International expects an order book of ₹10,000 crore in the current fiscal, according to the Chaudhary.