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Lorraine Chan (03) 7721 8001**MK Land to sell off RM362.9m worth of unsold units**

Property developer MK Land Holdings Bhd will focus on selling off unsold units from its completed projects worth up to RM362.9 million within the next two years.

Group chief executive officer K. Mohanachandran said the bulk of the units are from the semi-detached Rafflesia development and Armanee Terrace condominium in Damansara Perdana, Petaling Jaya, as well as some units in Residensi Suasana in Damansara Damai and Meru Perdana in Ipoh.

"Pricing does play a major factor, but I think it is more an issue of awareness. So that is why we have embarked on a more aggressive approach to our marketing efforts right now," he told reporters after the group's annual general meeting on Dec 13.

"We will definitely look at rebates [to help boost sales]. If we were to carry these stocks, we will be incurring costs along the way. If we can cut our price down a little bit, we can save on these costs in the future," he added.

National Housing Policy 2.0 in final phase

The National Housing Policy (DRN) 2.0 for 2018-2022 is in the final phase of preparation, said Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government Minister Tan Sri Noh Omar.

The minister told Dewan Negara that the DRN would be a continuation of the existing DRN for 2013-2017, according to a report by Bernama.

"DRN 2.0 is formulated comprehensively with regard to improvements, including new housing industry challenges such as the provision

UEM Sunrise buys 19.24-acre land in Seri Kembangan

PHOTO BY UEM SUNRISE

(From left)
Director of
SASB Nor Din
Abdullah,
Anwar,
executive
director of
KRSB Alex Lee
and company
secretary
Stanley Loong.**UEM Sunrise Bhd has acquired a 19.24-acre land in Taman Equine, Seri Kembangan, for residential units with an estimated GDV of about RM700 million.**

In a statement on Tuesday, UEM Sunrise said its unit Sunrise Alliance Sdn Bhd had inked a sale and purchase agreement with Kemaris Residences Sdn Bhd to buy the land for RM109.5 million.

UEM Sunrise said the development order has been approved for

the project comprising 924 residential units, which is targeted at upper-mid market purchasers.

Taman Equine is located about 18km to the south of Kuala Lumpur city centre, and is easily accessible via Maju Expressway, Lebuhraya Damansara Puchong and South Klang Valley Expressway. It added that the Equine Park MRT (Mass Rapid Transit) Station, which is currently under construction, is located 1.3km to the south of the land.

UEM Sunrise managing director and CEO Anwar Syahrin Abdul Ajib said the project will help expand UEM Sunrise's presence in the central region.

"With our vast experience in developing high-rise developments in Mont'Kiara, we have all the expertise and skill sets required to replicate our success of this renowned international enclave for the Equine land project," he said.

of transit homes for the M40 youth category, design and regulation of the latest housing prices," he said when winding-up the Supply Bill 2018 at the policy stage for his ministry.

According to the minister, DRN 2.0 would involve cooperation from Khazanah and state governments.

Meanwhile, the ministry was also in the final stages of the development of the Housing Data Bank System portal, which is expected to be accessible from next year.

The portal will share stocks and sales of homes under the bumiput-

era quota housing units available in the property market, he said.

DBKL: KL City Plan 2020 not cancelled

Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) said the KL City Plan 2020 has not been cancelled, but it will be coming up with an update for 2040 or 2050.

Parts of the KL City Plan 2020 and the KL Structure Plan 2020 will be used to "fine-tune and improve" the updated city plan, said Segambut MP Lim Lip Eng.

The KL City Plan 2020 was launched in 2008 and produced at a cost of RM30 million. It was originally meant to be gazetted in 2012 but this was postponed to Feb 28, 2013, following objections over land usage.

In March, KL mayor Tan Sri Mohd Amin Nordin Abd Aziz had said it was pointless to gazette a plan that would expire in three years. Moreover, the plan is not feasible, given that land prices have escalated significantly from when it was launched until now, he said.

How do I get past issues of this weekly pullout?
Go to www.EdgeProp.my to download for free**LAUNCHES + EVENTS**If you have any real estate-related events, email us at editor@edgeprop.my.
Events listed here will also appear on www.EdgeProp.my.**PRIMA Open Day at Residensi PRIMA Kuala Ketil****Date:** Dec 16 and 17 (Sat and Sun)**Time:** 9am to 5pm**Venue:** Pejabat Pengurusan Residensi PRIMA Kuala Ketil, 281, Jalan Insaniah 7, Taman Insaniah Kuala Ketil, Kedah
Contact: (03) 7628 9898

PRIMA is having an open day at its Kuala Ketil office this weekend where 33 PRIMA residential projects will be showcased to potential homebuyers. Bring your MyKad, EPF statement, bank statements and salary slip to be an eligible purchaser.

Preview of Cemara Damai Residence**Date:** Dec 16 (Sat)**Time:** 10am to 3pm**Venue:** Alam Damai Sales Gallery, 33, Jalan Damai Niaga, Alam Damai, Cheras, Kuala Lumpur
Contact: (03) 9102 3980
Join I&P Sdn Bhd at the preview of their first condominium

project in the 641-acre lush green Cemara Damai Residence at Alam Damai, Cheras, and stand a chance to win an iPhone X. The condo units are priced at RM535 psf.

A Merry Surprise at Tropicana Gardens**Date:** Dec 16 and 17 (Sat and Sun)**Time:** 11am to 5pm**Venue:** Tropicana Gardens Property Gallery, Jalan PJU 3/21, Tropicana Indah, Petaling Jaya, Selangor
Contact: (03) 7880 0989

Join I&P Sdn Bhd for a "merry surprise" and you could be in the running to win prizes such as iPhone

8 Plus, Samsung 8 and iPad. A total of 3,000 prizes will be given out during the weekend event.

Christmas Wonderland @ Trio Sales Galleria**Date:** Dec 17 (Sun)**Time:** 4pm to 10pm**Venue:** TRIO Sales Galleria, Jalan Langat / KS06, Bandar Bukit Tinggi 1, Klang Bandar Diraja, Selangor
Contact: (03) 3162 3322

Celebrate the festive season with S P Setia Bhd by treating yourself and your family to activities such as Christmas tree decoration contest, gingerbread man cookies decoration and Christmas game stalls.

Move-in-Now expo by Seri Pajam Home**Date:** Dec 17 (Sun)**Time:** 10am to 6pm**Venue:** Nusa Intan show unit, PT-9889, Jalan BBN 1/3 J, Nilai, Selangor
Contact: (06) 678 2988

Seri Pajam Development is organising a Move-in-Now expo, offering a "zero hassle package" for homebuyers. Light refreshments will be provided.

Astetica Residences road show**Date:** Dec 18 to 31 (Mon to Sun)**Time:** 10am to 10pm**Venue:** Tesco Extra Puchong, 148, Jalan Bandar 3, Pusat Bandar Puchong, Puchong, Selangor
Contact: (03) 8958 5766

Hua Yang Bhd will be conducting a series of road shows for its Astetica Residences located in Seri Kembangan, Selangor. The prices for the serviced apartments start from RM546,040, the studio offices RM412,920, and the retail units RM656,800.





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Hotline: 1300-888-178

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+607-505 8888 (INT'L / MY)

- Forest City Sales Gallery Galeri Jualan Mentari, Presint Aurora, Jalan Forest City 1, Pulau Satu, 81550, Gelang Patah, Johor, Malaysia
- Forest City Golf Resort Hotel Reception, Persiaran Golf 5, Forest City Golf Resort, 81550, Gelang Patang, Johor
- Forest City 森林城市 | forestcity_countrygarden



Forest City Website

Developer License: 14188-12/07-2019/0554(L) • Validity Period: 28/07/2017-27/07/2019 • Advertising & Sales Permit: 14188-12/07-2019/0554(P) • Validity Period: 28/07/2017-27/07/2019 • Developer Name: Country Garden Pacificview Sdn Bhd • Address: Jalan Forest City 1, Pulau Satu, 81550, Johor Darul Ta'zim • Phone No.: +6072886666 • Land Tenure: Freehold • Land Encumbrance: Nil • Description: Serviced Apartment • Name of the Housing Development: Nigella Park • Expected Completion Date: May 2020 • Selling Price: RM2,989,000 (MIN)-RM19,188,000 (MAX) • Total: 136 units • Approving Authority: MPJBT • Nomor Rujukan: MPJBT/UBR/16/3/2017(27) • Developer Name: Country Garden Pacificview Sdn Bhd • Address: Jalan Forest City 1, Pulau Satu, 81550, Johor Darul Ta'zim • Phone No.: +6072886666 • Land Tenure: Freehold • Land Encumbrance: Nil • Description: Serviced Apartment • Name of the Housing Development: Ataraxia Park 1 • Expected Completion Date: July 2019 • Selling Price: RM189,000 (MIN)-RM3,203,000 (MAX) • Total: 2005 units • Approving Authority: MPJBT • Nomor Rujukan: (119)dm.MPJBT/UBR/16/15/2019 • Developer License: 14188-10/01-2019/432(L) • Validity Period: 01/07/2016-30/06/2018 • Advertising & Sales Permit: 14188-7/06-2018/0496(P) • Validity Period: 01/07/2016-30/06/2018 • Description: Serviced Apartment • Name of the Housing Development: Ataraxia Park 2 • Expected Completion Date: May 2020 • Selling Price: RM259,400 (MIN)-RM4,372,300 (MAX) • Total: 3562 units • Approving Authority: MPJBT • Nomor Rujukan: MPJBT/UBR/16/20/2016 • Developer License: 14188-8/06-2018/0496(L) • Validity Period: 01/07/2016-30/06/2018 • Advertising & Sales Permit: 14188-8/06-2018/0496(P) • Validity Period: 01/07/2016-30/06/2018 • Description: Serviced Apartment • Name of the Housing Development: Ataraxia Park 3 • Expected Completion Date: July 2019 • Selling Price: RM187,000 (MIN)-RM2,211,000 (MAX) • Total: 2251 units • Approving Authority: MPJBT • Nomor Rujukan: (8)dm.MPJBT/UBR/16/2019 • Developer License: 14188-9/09-2019/0717(L) • Validity Period: 20/09/2016-19/09/2018 • Advertising & Sales Permit: 14188-9/09-2019/0717(P) • Validity Period: 20/09/2016-19/09/2018 • Description: Serviced Apartment • Name of the Housing Development: Ataraxia Park 4 • Expected Completion Date: February 2020 • Selling Price: RM231,000 (MIN)-RM3,780,000 (MAX) • Total: 4033 units • Approving Authority: MPJBT • Nomor Rujukan: (14)dm.MPJBT/UBR/16/21/2019 • Developer License: 14188-6/04-2018/0295(L) • Validity Period: 28/04/2016-28/04/2018 • Advertising & Sales Permit: 14188-6/04-2018/0295(P) • Validity Period: 28/04/2016-28/04/2018 • Description: Strata Landed Housing • Name of the Housing Development: Pearly Litoral • Expected Completion Date: May 2019 • Cluster House: 109 units • Selling Price: RM1,620,000(MIN)-RM9,800,000(MAX) • Semi-Detached House: 98 units • Selling Price: RM1,600,000(MIN)-RM14,740,000(MAX) • Bungalow: 27 units • Selling Price: RM5,630,000(MIN)-RM26,980,000(MAX) • Approving Authority: MPJBT • Nomor Rujukan: (12)dm.MPJBT/UBR/16/8/2016 • Developer License: 14188-13/09-2019/0656(L) • Validity Period: 26/08/2017-25/08/2019 • Advertising & Sales Permit: 14188-13/09-2019/0656(P) • Validity Period: 26/08/2017-25/08/2019 • Developer Name: Country Garden Pacificview Sdn Bhd • Address: Jalan Forest City 1, Pulau Satu, 81550, Johor Darul Ta'zim • Phone No.: +6072886666 • Land Tenure: Freehold • Land Encumbrance: Nil • Description: Serviced Apartment • Name of the Housing Development: Carmelian Tower 1 • Expected Completion Date: December 2020 • Selling Price: RM502,000 (MIN)-RM4,200,000 (MAX) • Total: 297 Units • Approving Authority: MPJBT • Nomor Rujukan: MPJBT/UBR/17/2017(21) • Developer License: 14188-14/10-2019/0866(L) • Validity Period: 31/10/2017-30/10/2019 • Advertising & Sales Permit: 14188-14/10-2019/0866(P) • Validity Period: 31/10/2017-30/10/2019 • Developer Name: Country Garden Pacificview Sdn Bhd • Address: 3rd Floor Reception, Phoenix Hotel, Jalan Forest City 1, Pulau Satu, 81550, Johor Darul Ta'zim • Phone No.: +6072886666 • Land Tenure: Freehold • Land Encumbrance: Nil • Description: Strata Landed Housing • Name of the Housing Development: Fringe Villa • Expected Completion Date: October 2019 • 2-Story Cluster House: 148 units • Selling Price: 1,030,000 (MIN)-RM 5,071,000 (MAX) • 3-Story Cluster House: 204 units • Selling Price: RM 1,754,000 (MIN)-RM 8,200,000 (MAX) • Semi-Detached House: 76 units • Selling Price: RM 4,327,000 (MIN)-RM 19,842,000 (MAX) • Approving Authority: MPJBT • Nomor Rujukan: MPJBT/UBR/16/25/2017 •



Experts to offer clarity on the property market at summit

BY LUM KA KAY

PETALING JAYA: The Malaysian property market has been rather lacklustre these days as it remains soft. Owing to concerns over unsold units, the government decided to freeze approvals for certain property segments, alarming some while receiving kudos from others.

Hoping to provide some clarity on what lies ahead for the local property sector and what really needs to be done moving forward, the upcoming 11th Malaysian Property Summit has invited prominent experts in the country to provide their insights on the property market for 2018.

Organised by The Association of Valuers, Property Managers, Estate Agents and Property Consultants in the Private Sector Malaysia (PEPS), organising chairman Michael Kong believes that with up-to-date and accurate information, as well as in-depth analysis of the available data by industry experts, the public in general and the property industry in particular will be able to make informed decisions about their real estate business and investments.

"The summit also hopes to address the current property overhang issue in a more systematic manner by giving pointed perspectives on the respective strata, sectors and geographical locations as real estate is

MACREAL INTERNATIONAL



Kong: The summit hopes to address the current property overhang issue by giving pointed perspectives on the respective stratum, sectors and geographical locations.

unique and not homogeneous in nature.

"Our carefully selected speakers are captains of the industry specialising in specific sectors of the market. They will be able to give a clear picture of the overhang issue," said Kong, who is also the founder of MacReal International Sdn Bhd.

He added that PEPS is looking to host over 400 attendees for the 11th edition of the annual summit which will be held on Jan 23, 2018 at the Sime Darby Convention Centre in Kuala Lumpur.

EdgeProp.my is the official media partner and the event will be graced by Finance Minister II Datuk Seri Johari Abdul Ghani.

Among the guest speakers will be the director-general of the Valuation and Property Services Department (JPPH) under the

Finance Ministry Nordin Daharom, PEPS president and CBRE|WTW managing director Foo Gee Jen, Knight Frank Malaysia managing director Sarkunan Subramaniam, Savills (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd deputy executive chairman Allan Soo, Rahim & Co International Sdn Bhd research director Sulaiman Akhmad Mohd Saheh, PPC International Sdn Bhd executive director Mark Saw and international KGV Property Consultants Sdn Bhd executive director Samuel Tan.

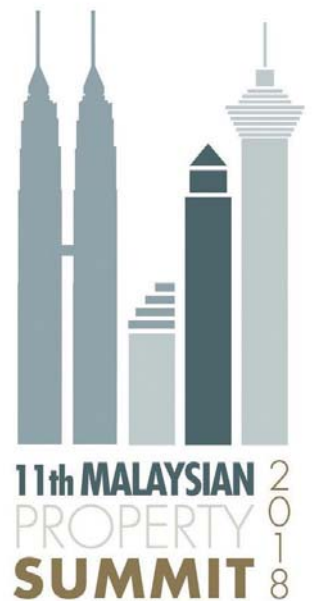
There will also be sessions by TRX City Sdn Bhd CEO Datuk Azmar Talib and MCA Belt and Road Centre deputy executive chairman Datuk Joseph Lim.

Noting that the real estate industry is also being disrupted by technology, Kong added that summit speakers will also touch on the impact of digital transformation on the industry.

"Technology has changed the way we live, work and play. Breakthrough technologies are emerging at incredible speeds.

"Things like reversing paralysis, self-driving vehicles, facial recognition technology, practical quantum computers, botnets and others are transforming humankind as we speak. And inevitably, real estate as we know it will also be affected," he added.

For more details on the summit, go to www.peps.org.my.



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Amalan Setar to offer landed homes below RM400,000 in Rawang

BY RACHEL CHEW

RAWANG: Amalan Setar (M) Sdn Bhd plans to roll out a 67-acre landed housing development called Alamanda Parklands in Rawang, Selangor in January 2018.

Located near the border of Serendah, Alamanda Parklands has a GDV of RM390 million.

"Landed homes are our strength. Before Alamanda Parklands, we have delivered a few affordable landed residential developments in Semenyih and Rinching. We will continue to do what we do best at our first project in Rawang," Amalan Setar director of operations Charles Gopal told EdgeProp.my.

Amalan Setar was established in 1997 with Taman Pendamar Indah 2 in Klang, Selangor. It has since developed other projects including Semenyih Parklands in Semenyih



An artist impression of Alamanda Parklands, Rawang.

and Semenyih Parklands in Rinching. Ongoing projects include Alamanda Parklands in Rawang, Sutera Parklands in Kajang and Taman Sutera in Raub, Pahang.

The freehold Alamanda Parklands consists of 913 houses to be developed over nine phases, with completion within five to six years.

"Earthworks are going on now. We are also building the show unit for phase 1. We aim to officially launch the first phase by January next year," said Charles.

The first phase covers 20 acres and has a GDV of RM85 million. It offers 234 units of 2-storey terraced houses with land sizes ranging from 16ft by 55ft to 18ft by 60ft. The net selling prices start from RM299,800 and RM365,000, respectively.

"This is what we always do — offer affordable houses to the market. We don't attract investors nor chase the upmarket buyers. We build quality affordable houses so buyers can get loans more easily. Our project will also sell fast so we can deliver the product ahead of schedule. This is our strategy," Charles explained.

"We are clear about our position and strength. I am confident that this project will be well received like our previous projects. I believe we can fully sell phase 1 within six to eight months of launch," he said. Phase 2, and maybe phase 3, may also be launched sometime next year.

For the future phases, the developer may offer 1-storey houses. "There is a market for 1-storey houses. For senior citizens, for in-

stance, they prefer 1-storey houses because it is convenient for them," he explained.

He added that the company will test market acceptance by having a 1-storey show unit at its sales gallery.

"We will probably launch the 1-storey product on a small scale only after phase 2 and make adjustments based on market demand. We have to be very sensitive to market trends," Charles shared.

Charles said Alamanda Parklands is located at the north of Rawang town centre, hence it is not in direct competition with projects in the busy Rawang town.

"We are on the older side of Rawang, so you don't have to go through the busy Rawang town to reach the project site. You can take the Sungai Buaya toll plaza from the North-South Expressway and you will reach the project site in five minutes," he explained.

Alamanda Parklands shares the same entrance as Perodua's headquarters at Sungai Choh. Next to Perodua is the future UMW & Rolls Royce Aerospace factory, which is scheduled to start production by the end of this year.

"We are targeting the staff of these plants as well as upgraders from the old projects in the vicinity. Our houses feature a modern and contemporary design emphasising natural ventilation and light. It may not be a government affordable housing scheme but it is very affordable," Charles concluded.

Charles believes Alamanda Parklands will be well received.



'Borrow' – the key to unlocking value in property investment

BY CHRIS TAN



The concept of “borrow” is the final piece of the parcel in our uniquely crafted Property Investment Quadrant (PIQ). Having taken you through “buy”, “sell” and “use” of the PIQ in this 4-part series, we will now explore the final and most important part of them all. The ability to borrow (or leverage) is that one single special feature that puts property investment heads and shoulders ahead of other types of conventional investments.

Property or any form of real estate is the favourite collateral of any banks or financial lending institutions. The majority of the lending offered is backed by assets as security, and again, most of these assets are the solid brick and mortar of real estate. In other words, investors can own properties of much bigger value than their initial cash commitment.

A journey in property investment will not be complete and may not be successful without leveraging the magic of borrowing. Banks or any licensed lenders are more than willing to assist your property acquisition by offering substantial margin of financing and yet only asking for a fixed return made known to you upfront.

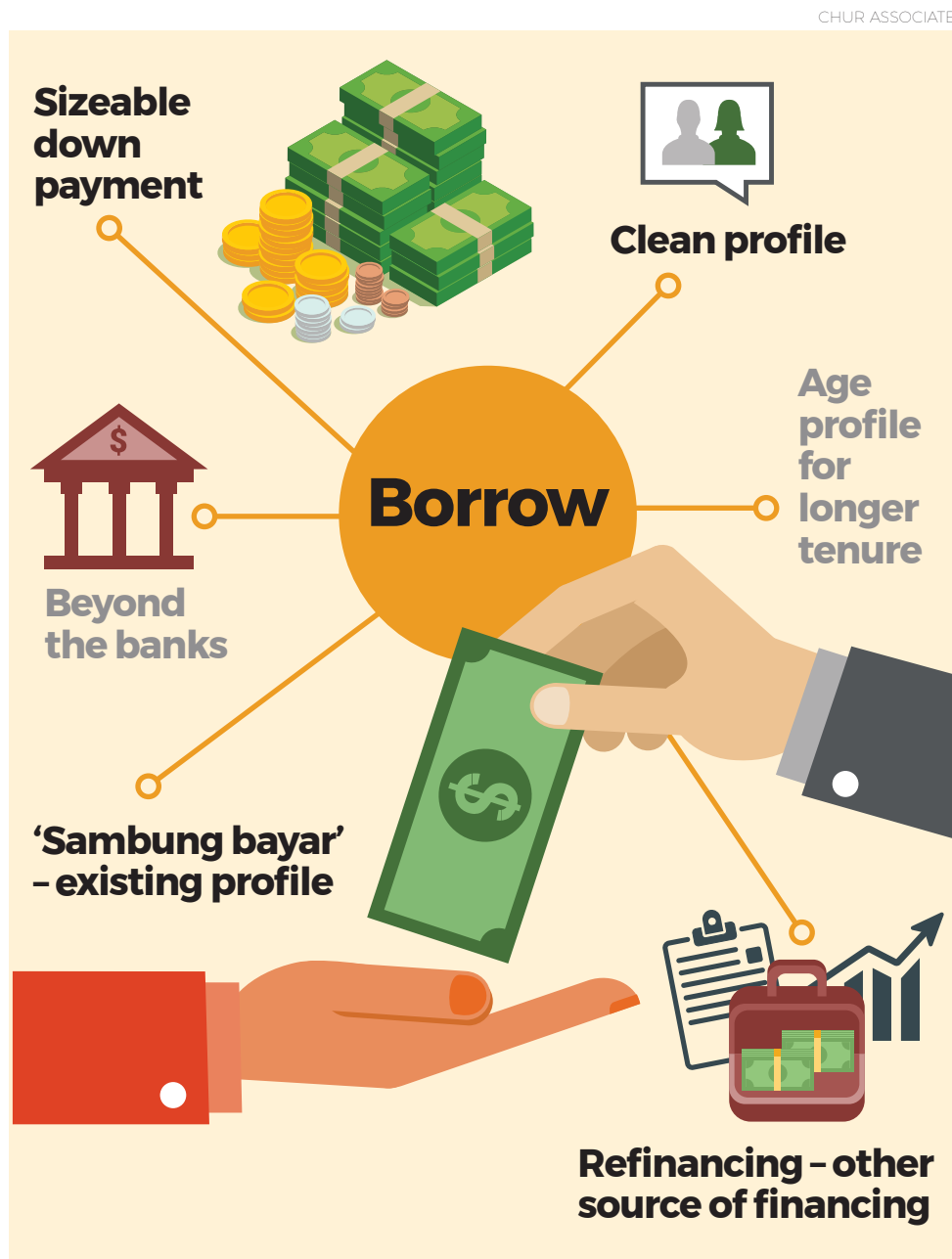
Furthermore, when the property has increased in value, refinancing to cash out on the value appreciation is another option to expand your investment portfolio. And when times are bad, you can also restructure your borrowings to accommodate your tightened cash flow, particularly when your property value has remained strong.

To make your property investment sustainable in the long run, you need to master the art of borrowing. Learn how the entire lending system works and outsmart the system. Do you also know you can “borrow” many other things that could be useful for you as a property investor and not just money alone?

1. Clean profile

When you have bought many properties and have borrowed from banks to finance each of them, you become risky in the eyes of the banks, especially when your income is limited and your cash flow stretched. In this stage of your property investment portfolio, you will find that you will be granted a lower margin of financing (therefore higher initial capital outlay) or outright rejection, or if you are lucky, conditional approval with harsh requirements like the pledge of additional fixed deposit to secure the loan. It's no longer about the value of the property that you are buying but rather your ability to pay back.

This is when you need to look for a “clean” profile to continue your property investment journey with a win-win collaboration. The obvious targets would be your immediate family and friends who have admired your investment returns but have never taken any action beyond admiration. Try approaching them and offer them an investment collaboration based on your past records. The fact



that these potential partners have stable incomes and little borrowing would make them the darlings of any lending institution. Besides, their investment risks are also reduced with your participation.

2. Age profile

Seasoned property investors know that property investment is essentially a game of cash flow. They know that the monthly instalment for a new loan will be more substantial as they age and effectively reduce the loan tenure. While the projected value appreciation of the property is promising, the higher monthly loan repayment made is not feasible, especially when market rental does not match the repayment amount to the bank.

This is where you want to “borrow” the age of your new investment partners. Your younger spouse, siblings, friends or even your children who have perhaps just joined the work force. Having these partners to borrow and acquire your next property investment would strategically stretch the loan tenure to reduce the monthly loan repayment to be more compatible with the market rental generated.

3. Refinancing

It is either yield or appreciation that you are after in property investment. How do you borrow for the same property twice?

By unleashing certain capital derived from the value appreciation of the property. This is nothing new and is commonly called “refinancing”. This is particularly useful when you know how to deploy these newfound capitals.

You have a choice to either refinance from the same bank based on the increased valuation of the property acquired earlier, or you can ask a new bank to take over the loan with a higher valuation from the existing bank.

Sometimes you may be motivated to refinance if you can save on the bank interest or from a bank's flexible repayment programme, but do consider all the direct and indirect costs that may be incurred in the process.

Besides, the refinanced portion of the loan is commonly considered as a personal loan, resulting in shorter loan repayment tenure.

4. 'Sambung bayar'

This is where you collaborate or be an investment joint-venture partner with a property owner who is facing cash flow difficulty and is unable to pay the monthly loan repayment. With proper documentation in place, you can offer to pay the monthly loan repayment on his/her behalf in exchange for a profit-sharing arrangement in the event of the ultimate disposal, while the property owner can still enjoy the premises without the need

To make your property investment sustainable in the long run, you need to master the art of borrowing.

to concede to any fire sales and all his/her contribution remains intact in the value preservation of the property investment.

5. Beyond banks

Borrowing to purchase property is not just limited to conventional banks. You can consider Islamic banking or other lenders such as the Malaysian Building Society Bhd, or even the many insurance companies that can also offer financing for your property acquisition.

Licensed moneylenders can be an option too. But be aware that the loan interests and packages are not the same as those commonly offered by banks.

When the margin of financing for a loan is lower than expected, one can consider the permitted withdrawal from the Employees Provident Fund.

6. Sizeable down payment

If it is regarding cash flow, do consider a higher down payment for your property acquisition than the usual 10% to 20%, especially when you have some idle funds sitting around not working hard enough for you for good returns. In the long term, you will have the ease of a lower cash flow commitment to get your desired returns.

So this completes the entire PIQ. The intention is to let you have more options and thus allowing enough flexibility to take you through any challenges along your journey as an astute property investor.

If you have any property-related legal questions for Tan, please go to the Tools section of www.EdgeProp.my.

Chris Tan is a lawyer, author, speaker and keen observer of real estate locally and abroad. Mainly, he is the founder and now managing partner of Chur Associates.

Disclaimer: The information here does not constitute legal advice. Please seek professional legal advice for your specific needs.



BY SHAWN NG

One of the most common forms of property investments is property leasing, a source of income that dates back many centuries.

Due to its long-term yet stable mode of income, the rent that a property owner receives every month could mitigate or even offset the monthly instalment on the mortgage for the property partly or in whole. Hence, leasing out a property is a good strategy for owners to gain some returns on their investment while waiting for the property's value to appreciate in future.

This is particularly true for Low who purchased a 2-bedroom apartment unit in Arena Green, Bukit Jalil for investment over 15 years ago.

The unit was priced around RM100,000 or RM137 psf when the 54-year-old, who only wants to be known as Low, bought it from developer Berjaya Land Bhd.

"I don't know much about investing. At that time, I was just accompanying a friend of mine to buy a unit there. Then I was attracted by the design and facilities, so it was somewhat of a coincidence that I bought this unit for investment," she tells EdgeProp.my.

She then leased out the entire apartment, which has a built-up of about 730 sq ft, for a monthly rent ranging from RM600 to RM1,400 over the years to different tenants.

"I appointed an estate agent to handle everything for me, so I don't have to worry about it," she adds.

Although she still needs to pay for the maintenance fees, quit rent, assessment and the cost to repair or replace appliances that came with the apartment, Low was able to pay off the housing loan for the apartment with the rental income she received in 15 years as the monthly instalment was only about RM600.

"I'm glad that it turned out to be a good investment. I heard from the agent that the apartment has a market value of some RM300,000 today, which translates into a capital gain of 200%," she says.

The available listings on EdgeProp.my showed that the average asking price for an apartment in Arena Green was RM377,205 or RM457 psf, while the average monthly asking rental was RM1,305 or RM1.54 psf as of Dec 6. A transaction in the first quarter of 2017 recorded RM355,000 or RM402 psf.

With the recent announcement of a 50% tax exemption on rental income in Budget 2018 and the proposed formulation of a Residential Rental Act, these success stories may well encourage you to consider adopting a buy-to-let investment strategy.

But before you jump into it, let's take a step back and take a look at the big picture and see if a rental investment is suitable for you.

How does it work?

The definition of a residential buy-to-let is quite simple — you buy a house and then rent it out to gain rental income before you sell it off or not, to reap the capital gain.

From this approach, there are two forms of possible income — rental income and capital growth. However, the actual returns will vary depending on the type of property, location, market conditions and tenant's profile.

"If done right, buy-to-let is a very safe and simple strategy that is able to offer a stable rental income while waiting for capital values of the property to go up," says property investment and investment education firm CORE Investors Sdn Bhd founder and director Rachel Lim.

"You will be able to reap a harvest if you manage to keep a property long enough. But of course you have to manage the upkeep of your property throughout the period to avoid

BE A BUY-TO-LET INVESTOR



deterioration of the property value," she adds.

As the landlord and property owner, unless you appoint an estate agent, you will need to address issues that may arise from the property or the tenants such as repairs or replacement of broken items in the unit, recover damages on the property, and claiming back defaults on rental payment, among others.

To protect both landlord and tenant, there has to be a tenancy agreement that lists down all the terms and conditions, details of the landlord and tenant, the tenancy period, the rental rate, the fixtures and fittings in the unit and others.

Where to find a good rental property?

Whether the property that you are letting out is a worthy investment or not depends on the rental returns. Generally, according to Lim, the gross rental yield for a landed home in the Klang Valley ranges between 2% and 4%, while a non-landed residence will range from 4% to 6%. An excellent rental property is able to offer at least 8% gross yield, she adds.

"A property that can provide an equal or more than 8% of gross returns is a worthy investment, because around six percentage points of the gross returns will go to monthly instalment, quit rent, assessment and other costs. Hence, your net yield is actually only 2%.

"Although it is difficult to find properties that offer such high yields in the current market, it doesn't mean they don't exist. So you have to be very committed and sometimes this means that you have to screen through 95% of the listings in the market to get a gem," says Lim.

The secondary and auction markets are good places to hunt for a good property for buy-to-let investments as buyers can be more certain of the condition of the property, the prices and rental rates in the neighbourhood and the residents' or tenants' profile in the area.

On top of that, investors can also purchase

a property that already have tenants and so are able to generate immediate returns.

"Buying an existing property means you can take immediate action after acquiring the property, including renovations if needed and furnishing the place and making it ready to be let out. One can generate rental income in a rather short period.

"Also look for desperate sellers who would sell their property at a lower price, or consider buying a non-landed unit of below RM300,000 and add value to it to boost rental returns," she offers.

Meanwhile, property education and investment company Skybridge International Sdn Bhd CEO Adrian Un says low-rise walk-up flats and apartments tagged from RM300,000 to RM400,000 and located close

to amenities and public transportation are good choices as rental investment property.

"These properties will be able to achieve returns of 5% and above as they are products that the mass public can afford. The best option would be those low-density projects with no more than 200 units," he says.

On top of that, the property's location and developer's reputation are other factors that investors should take into consideration.

"Houses situated in prime areas will continue to attract tenants while properties located in a neighbourhood where there are constant community engagement are also worth paying attention to, as these community activities will create a sense of belonging among residents in the area. One good example is Desa ParkCity," Un says.

PICTURES BY LOW YEN YEING | EdgeProp.my



Buy-to-let is a very safe and simple strategy that is able to offer a stable rental income. — Lim



Houses situated in prime areas will continue to attract tenants. — Un



Residential buy-to-let would suit investors who...



...are looking for a combination of **rental income** and the potential for **capital growth**.



...have the **time and inclination** to be involved in **managing properties**.



...have **sufficient cash** ready to snap up **below-market-value properties**.



...want a **relatively secure source** of **supplementary retirement income**.



Pitfalls to avoid

- 1. Do your research or homework** before committing to an investment.
- 2. Do not give up on the investment halfway** despite the challenges that may arise. Again, do your homework and be mentally prepared for whatever may come your way as a landlord.
- 3. Do not ignore the importance of property management.** Maintaining your rental property may be a troublesome job but keep in mind that a property that is NOT well maintained will affect its appeal to potential tenants and buyers.
- 4. Do not expect to get rich quick.** A buy-to-let investment is a long-term investment, therefore it will need patience and hard work.

Of course, many investors also know among the best markets for rental investment are the student and expatriate markets.

"If you are looking to rent to students, you can look at Subang (Selangor) and other education hubs in the country. Meanwhile, Kuala Lumpur city centre, Mont'Kiara in KL and Bukit Indah in Johor are good if you are targeting expat tenants who are willing to pay a slightly higher rent for a decent house," says CORE's Lim.

"Areas that are home to a niche growing industry is also worth keeping an eye on. For example, I have invested in a 2-storey terraced house in Desaru, Johor where the oil and gas industry is booming. I bought the house at RM380,000 and am leasing it out at about RM4,000 to RM5,000 per month, which translates into a rental yield of about 12%," she adds.

Upkeep of property is key to good returns

Lim notes that to get decent capital gains on a rental property, landlords would have to wait for a long period. In the meantime, they have to ensure the property remains in constant good condition and deal with all sorts of tenants.

"Many people think it is an easy job to be a landlord and maintain a rental property or address a tenant's problem. But the fact is, many got so fed up with the challenges of being a landlord that they eventually let go of their property even at a loss. Hence, my suggestion to those who want to get into this business is to be prepared and be aware of the challenges as these are part and parcel of investing in a rental property," she says.

Lim also warns that property investors should not be blinded by greed and avoid buying based on speculation.

"A lot of people buy properties based on speculation that prices and rents will go up. When things go wrong, they will suffer financial loss and strain," she says.

Un concurs and reminds investors to keep an eye on the property management of the property that they are buying into.

"Upkeep of a property is crucial. Let's say you are buying a completed stratified property for rent — you must find out the rate for the maintenance fees. If a lot of the owners are not paying, the condition of the property will not be good going forward, thus lowering its appeal to prospective tenants or buyers," he says.

The pros and cons of buy-to-let investing

PROS



- 1. Maximise long-term gain** — buy-to-let is a mid-to-long-term strategy that allows one to get some income while waiting to realise gains from capital appreciation
- 2. Consistent and predictable source of income** if the landlord manages to secure a reliable long-term tenant
- 3.** Can opt for a **hands-off management** of the property by engaging an estate agent
- 4. Tax exemption** — landlords can enjoy tax exemption of 50% for rental income up to RM2,000 a month as announced in Budget 2018. The exemption will be given from year of assessment 2018 to 2020.

CONS

- 1.** Requires **substantial maintenance** — properties will get old and "sick" over time. Hence, landlords must ensure the property is well maintained to prevent decline in rent and value.
- 2. Void periods** — tenants will come and go, which will result in void periods when there will be no rental income. So it is advisable to maintain a sufficient buffer to cover relevant expenses if the property is going to be vacant for a while.
- 3. Problematic tenants** — some tenants may cause trouble and headaches to landlords. So do not take tenants' vetting lightly.
- 4. Lower income compared with capital gain** — unless you are leasing out a property that was bought at a very low price, the rental income may only be sufficient to offset your monthly instalment and provide you a scant extra income despite the time and effort required.



Look for good rental property in:



Student-populated areas

E.g. Subang Jaya, Seri Kembangan, Bandar Sungai Long, Nilai and Cyberjaya



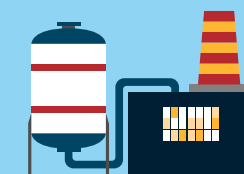
Established community-centric areas

E.g. Desa ParkCity and Mont'Kiara



Expat areas

E.g. Mont'Kiara, KLCC and Bukit Indah (Johor)



Growing industrial areas

E.g. Pulau Indah, Kundang, Kuala Selangor and Desaru (Johor)



EdgeProp

MALAYSIA'S BEST MANAGED PROPERTY AWARDS 2018

WHY The goal of the awards is to raise the bar on Malaysian property management practices while benchmarking against the best-in-class operations globally.

WHAT The awards, which include categories such as Residential, Office, Mixed Development, Specialised and Retail, are open to all strata and non-strata buildings managed in-house or by any property or building manager.

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- EdgeProp-ILAM Malaysia's Sustainable Landscape Award

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Awards results audited by Deloitte

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The 5th LafargeHolcim Awards AsiaPac

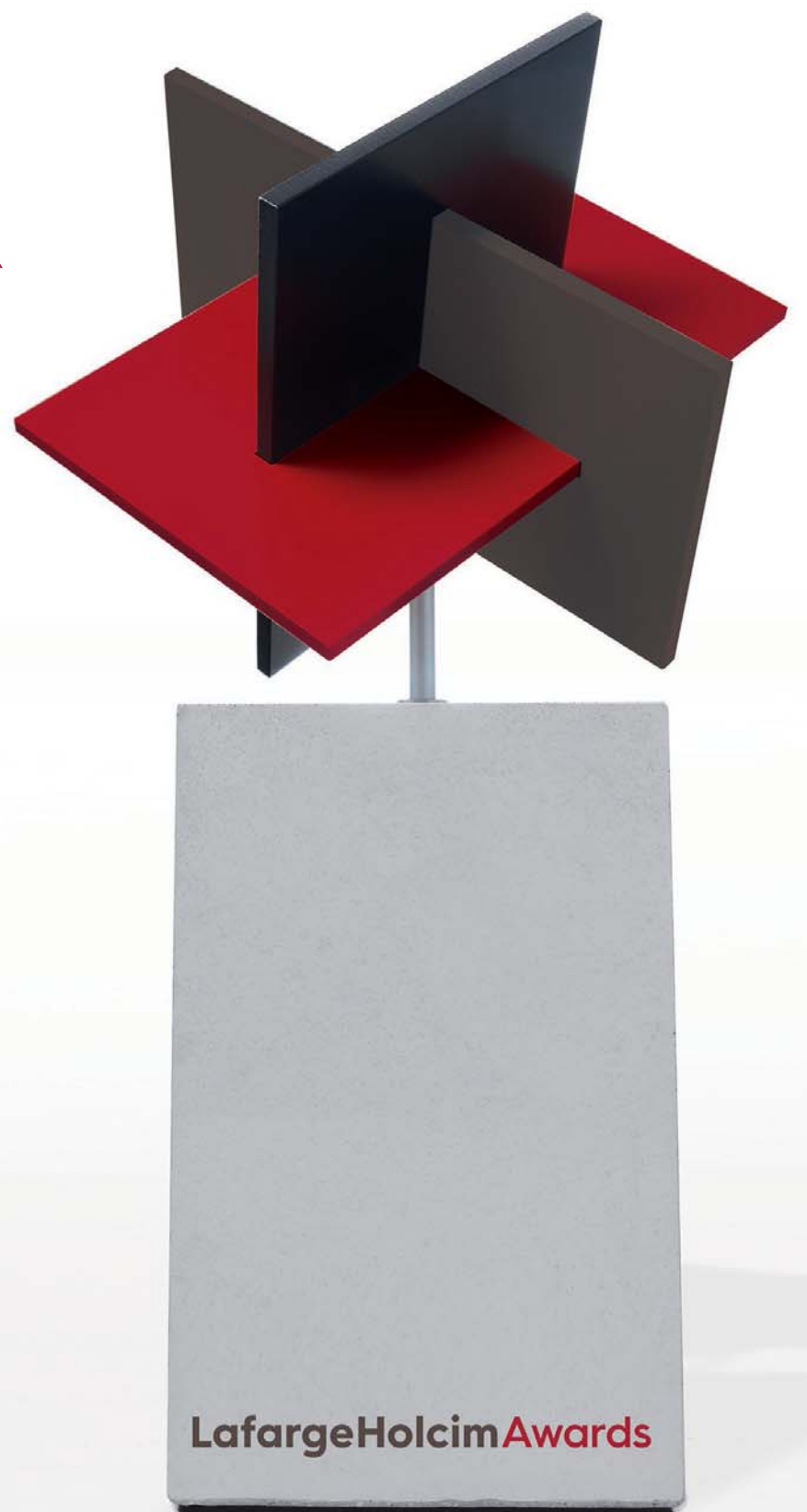
A SPECIAL REPORT BY

EdgeProp.my

DECEMBER 15, 2017

**SO THE
WORLD
BUILDS
BETTER**

Known as the world's most significant competition in sustainable design, the LafargeHolcim Awards, which is into its fifth cycle, has recently chosen its regional winners for Asia Pacific.




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Shifting perceptions

KENNY YAP | THE EDGE



Schwarz (right) and Atkinson

 BY **NATALIE KHOO**

When people talk about sustainability, what is the first thing that comes to mind? In the past, it would probably be buildings with a lot of greenery and open spaces. Well, that was then.

"[Previously], you call something sustainable when it is green, literally. You put a bit of greenery on the roof, and it is called sustainable. Those days are over.

"Today, if you want a building to be recognised as sustainable, it has to live up to the five target issues that the LafargeHolcim Foundation considers as sustainable construction from a holistic perspective," says Edward Schwarz, general manager of the LafargeHolcim Foundation for Sustainable Construction, Switzerland, who was in Kuala Lumpur for the recently concluded LafargeHolcim Awards 2017 Asia Pacific held on Nov 23.

The five target issues are progress (innovation and transferability), people (ethical standards and social inclusion), planet (resource and environmental performance), prosperity (economic viability and compatibility) and place (contextual and aesthetic impact).

They also serve as the basis for the adjudication process of the LafargeHolcim Awards competition.

"Generally, you can say that the construction has to make lives better somehow. It is about bringing [in] natural light and ventilation, using energy in the best way possible, as well as recycling. It is about how you build and how people are encouraged to use the staircase

and not elevators," adds Schwarz.

The LafargeHolcim Awards for sustainable design is organised by the LafargeHolcim Foundation. Each cycle spans three years and it is currently into its fifth cycle.

"Because we are not specialists in construction, we work with experts from renowned universities around the world. Of course, sustainability or sustainable construction will not be the same in Bangladesh as, say, in Canada, thus we need the local support as well. So we have members on the Foundation's Board who are from all over the world to help keep us on the right track," offers Schwarz.

Meanwhile, LafargeHolcim Foundation board member and founding CEO of the Green Building Council of Australia Maria Atkinson AM notes that there is a need to keep up the momentum for sustainable construction to ensure whatever that is built will have a positive social impact and ultimately conserve resources.

Sustainability, she offers, is about balancing the environmental, social and economic aspects of a project. "The question to ask is whether we are building the right building for the future," says Atkinson.

"I would like to see the industry be more innovative and do things differently. We would like to see a lot more radical sustainable revolution. The industry needs to innovate; they need to set up buildings that can be there in the next 100 or 300 years," she adds.

According to Schwarz, it is ultimately about building better so that people can live better, and that means it has to be sustainable.

The awards at a glance

What is it about?

The competition's objective is to seek building solutions and visions that go beyond convention to address the challenges of sustainability. Each competition cycle spans three years, from announcement to completion with a total of US\$2 million (RM8.2 million) in prize money to be won. It is currently into its fifth cycle.

Awards organiser The LafargeHolcim Foundation for Sustainable Construction was created in 2003 to raise awareness of the important roles of architecture, engineering, urban planning and the building industry in achieving a sustainable future.

The competition first goes through the regional phase where independent juries supported by partner universities of the Foundation evaluate submissions in each of the five regions: Europe, North America, Latin America, Middle East and Africa, and Asia Pacific.

Projects in the main category that received Gold, Silver or Bronze in their respective regions automatically qualify for the Global LafargeHolcim Awards.

Categories

The main category is open to projects that are in the advanced stage of design with a high probability of execution (no restrictions to who may participate).

The Next Generation category is to seek out visions and bold ideas from young professionals and students (exclusively for authors younger than 30 years of age).

Evaluation
Based on five target issues:

- Progress** — innovation and transferability
- People** — ethical standards and social inclusion
- Planet** — resource and environmental performance
- Prosperity** — economic viability and compatibility
- Place** — contextual and aesthetic impact

Number of entries

As many as 5,085 projects from authors in 121 countries to be realised across 131 countries have been received in the current fifth cycle. Of that, 1,836 projects passed the formal and quality checks and were assessed by five independent regional juries, hosted by partner universities of the Foundation.

Timeline of the fifth cycle

- Submissions from July 4, 2016 to March 21, 2017
- Announcement of regional winners: September 2017 to November 2017
- Announcement of global winners: March 2018
- The sixth competition will open for entries in mid-2019

Prize money
REGIONAL
Main category

Gold — US\$100,000 (RM412,540)
Silver — US\$50,000 (RM206,270)
Bronze — US\$30,000 (RM123,762)
Acknowledgement prizes — US\$20,000 (RM82,508)

Next Generation category

First prize — US\$25,000 (RM103,135)
Second prize — US\$20,000 (RM82,508)
Third prize — US\$15,000 (RM61,881)
Fourth prize — US\$10,000 (RM41,254)

GLOBAL

Gold — US\$200,000 (RM821,160)
Silver — US\$100,000 (RM412,540)
Bronze — US\$50,000 (RM206,270)

Playing a part in sustainable construction

Sustainable development is a growing concern worldwide and Lafarge Malaysia wants to contribute its part.

"We have a role in promoting sustainability by operating in a sustainable manner from start to end and through the materials we produce," said president and CEO of Lafarge Malaysia Thierry Legrand.

For instance, Lafarge Malaysia has developed Hydromedia, an environmentally sustainable concrete solution that was awarded the Best New Product (Building Material-Concrete) in the Best @ Show Awards by Greenbuild Asia 2012. This fast-draining concrete solution

rapidly drains and channels storm water off streets, car parks, driveways and pavements, with the potential of being harvested and reused elsewhere, thus avoiding water ponding and floods.

"Materials suppliers should also be involved in the beginning of the project, at the design stage so that we can recommend the right materials for the right applications," he adds.

However, while the choice of materials is very important in sustainable construction, the design of the building is even more crucial because the main impact of a building on

the environment is in the usage of the building such as from its lighting, cooling, and heating systems.

Hence the significance of the LafargeHolcim Awards, Legrand stresses. The LafargeHolcim Awards' which is into its fifth cycle, promotes sustainable construction through sustainable design.

Legrand believes the objective of the LafargeHolcim Awards encompasses more than just what the industry has and can do. "The entries can be built with other materials other than concrete because at the end of the day, it is about sustainable designs," he says.

MOHD SUHAIMI MOHAMED YUSUF | THE EDGE



The 5th LafargeHolcim Awards AsiaPac

SPECIAL REPORT

WINNER: GOLD

Achieving much with limited means

White Rabbit Home for marginalised children, Thane, India

Many a time when we see a beautiful building, we admire the way it captures our attention, but do we ask whether the building impacts society and how it has changed the lives of those living in and around it?

The Gold Award winner of the LafargeHolcim Awards 2017 for Asia Pacific has, in its proposed design aesthetics and components, aimed to change the lives of the children who will be residing in it.

Designed by architects Avneesh Tiwari and Neha Rane of atArchitecture based in Mumbai, India, the project known as White Rabbit is to replace the current home for marginalised children located in Thane, India.

What's interesting is that every single component of the project has a function that addresses the five target issues of LafargeHolcim Foundation's focal points for evaluation of the award submissions.

At a media briefing following the awards night on Nov 23, Neha shared that the proposed project



Neha (left) and Avneesh won the gold prize.

revolved very much around three main factors — the emotion, efficiency and environmental impact this project creates.

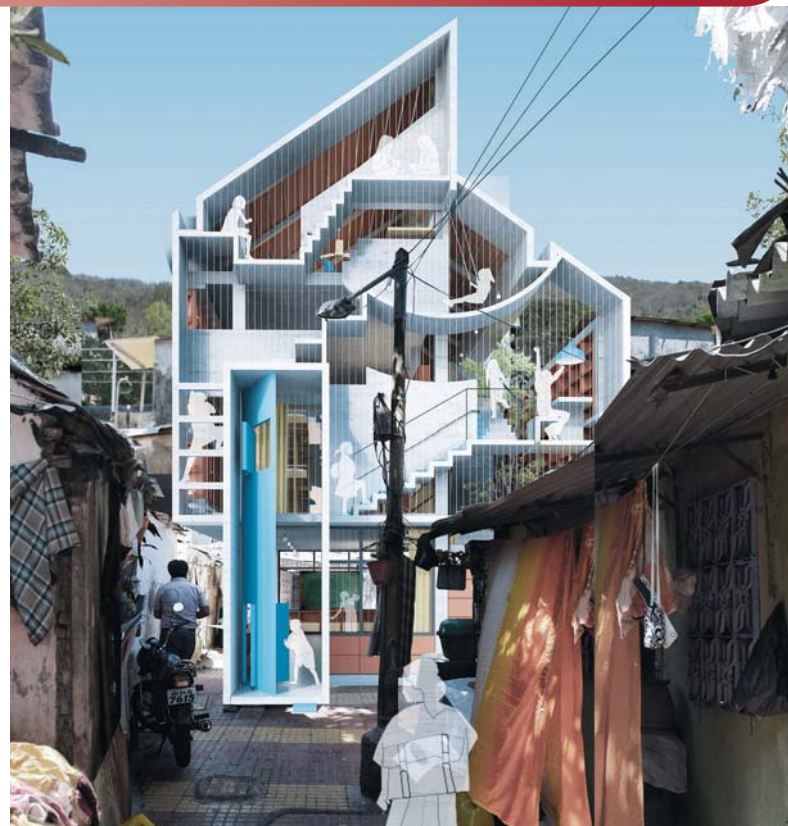
"This home was designed for children who are three to 16 years of age. The residents of this shelter are missing freedom and stability [in life] so this shelter aims to improve their lives and emotions," said Neha. The building will replace the existing facility, which is prone to floods and lacking in ventilation. It will be home to 30 children.

White Rabbit features three levels. The ground floor is planned as an open space for community ac-

tivities including for senior citizens, for women's development activities and for a crèche. It is designed like a veranda that opens up to a private courtyard on the north side and partly to the adjoining lanes on the other three sides, covered by a first floor overhang.

"The middle floor is for the children to sleep in so it is more enclosed, personal and private, while the top floor will be used as storage space, study area and the caretaker's sleeping area. The top floor will shelter the children's living space from the direct sun," shared Avneesh.

The north facade is essentially a



LAFARGEHOLCIM FOUNDATION

dead wall shared with an adjoining house. On the south side, there is a vertical nursery planted to reduce the heat coming into the living areas. The green wall can be installed using adjustable terracotta louvres for easy maintenance of the plants. Sun shades made out of thin folded plates of concrete located on the east and west create private recreational areas, effectively giving an additional 25 sq m of usable space.

The head of jury of the LafargeHolcim Awards 2017 in Asia Pacific and chair of Architectural Design, Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning, University of Melbourne

Australia Donald Bates noted that White Rabbit paid a lot of attention not just to details but details that do many things simultaneously.

"Every sq m or cubic cm tries to do something like shading the sun but at the same time storing a book; or provide privacy but at the same time provide a space for children's learning and exploration; or a rainwater harvesting system that is part of the structure.

"At the end of the day, it is all about improving lives through architectural intervention. The project is trying to use limited means for an expansion of possibilities."

WINNER: SILVER

Creating a space to raise literacy

Microlibrary Learning centre, Bandung, Indonesia

"Although reading is a scary thing for many, if we pair a well-designed building that can bring people together with community programmes, they will come," said Daliana Surywinata of SHAU Architects.

Daliana was talking about the Microlibrary, a learning centre in Bandung, Indonesia that was designed together with fellow architect from SHAU, Florian Heinzlmann.

Microlibrary, she noted, is not made up of a singular project but is a campaign to raise literacy by means of unique architecture and empowerment.

"[In 2030], Indonesia is expected to be one of the top five global economies. Yet our infrastructure is far from [being of a top global economy's]. It also needs to improve its Human Development Index. At SHAU, we like to think about the society — what [are the issues] going on in the world and how we can address these issues," shared Daliana. She explained that in Indonesia,

central libraries are not popular mainly because they are not easily accessible. Hence, the architects want to bring libraries closer to the community. In 2016, two Microlibraries were completed in Bandung.

The first pilot project in Taman Bima, Bandung was made by upcycling used ice cream buckets while the pattern of the facade is a coding of a message by Mayor Ridwan Kamil — "buku adalah jendela dunia" or "books are the windows to the world".

Meanwhile, Heinzlmann shared that four more Microlibraries are being planned. One of it is the Fibonacci Microlibrary in Taman Tegalega in Bandung, Indonesia, which emerged the Silver winner at the recent LafargeHolcim Awards 2017 for Asia Pacific.

"The Fibonacci Microlibrary is parametrically designed with spirally arrayed structure blends. At first sight, users do not perceive it as a library, but when they enter, they can just pick a spot and start reading. The three spiral rooms host a kiosk, a musholla and two toilets," said Heinzlmann. In their submission for the La-



LAFARGEHOLCIM FOUNDATION

An artist's impression of Microlibrary



Heinzlmann (left) and Surywinata were the recipients of the Silver winner at the Awards.

fargeHolcim Awards, it was proposed that the Fibonacci Microlibrary will be built using a combination of lightweight concrete structure, green roof, moss ceiling and artificial grass carpet.

The green surface of the park is continued into all the horizontal surfaces in the library, which will allow visitors to experience going through a sequence of open and semi-open green spaces. The open pavilion also allows visitors to enter from any direction and offers cross-ventilation and natural lighting.

The head of the LafargeHolcim Awards 2017 Asia Pacific jury and chair of Architectural Design, Faculty of Architecture, Building and

Planning of University of Melbourne, Australia Donald Bates notes that this project has put together simple components in creative ways and has achieved complexity with minimal means.

"In terms of its design, it's not a singular design repeated a hundred times. Every building responds to the needs of the local community in the urban context," said Bates. The jury noted that by multiplying small, inviting, reading spaces without replicating a single design structure, it constructs a territorial project reinforcing literacy and defining community.

SHAU Architects intends to build 100 Microlibraries in Indonesia.

SPECIAL REPORT

The 5th LafargeHolcim Awards AsiaPac

WINNER: BRONZE

New life for a polluted swamp

Floating University BRAC University campus, Dhaka, Bangladesh

What can one possibly do with a piece of polluted swamp land?

In Dhaka, Bangladesh, Singapore-based WOHA has come up with the design for a university campus that floats on a pond — and what's more, the overall design supports the cleaning of the pond.

Rapid urbanisation has resulted in the displacement of the city's water bodies, vegetation, wildlife and open, civic spaces, resulting in a dusty, harsh environment, and the site for the BRAC (Building Resources Across Communities) University campus site was no exception.

"It was a stinky muddy pond in the middle of the neighbourhood but we decided to make use of the space and designed the BRAC University campus building to be above the pond," said Richard Hassell and Sim Choon Heok, architects at WOHA Singapore.

"The new campus aims to bring back some of the lost biodiversity in the city, as well as to create a conducive space for learning and for human interaction," add-

ed Hassell at a media briefing following the awards night of the LafargeHolcim Awards 2017 for Asia Pacific where the BRAC University campus proposal received the Bronze Award.

To attract the lost biodiversity in the area to return, the proposal offers vertical gardens and edge-stacked planters with plants that attract insects and other animals. The team also suggested a roof lawn with fruit trees that could attract pollinating bees, as well as form a bird habitat.

"We will also have water features that recreate an ecosystem with local plants, forming a habitat that supports biodiversity," Hassell said.

The jury for the awards observed that sustainability is deeply integrated into the building design, from thermal zoning to serious reductions in the use of energy and water. The swamp itself is first turned into a bio-retention pond. "Particularly commendable is the way a single building is conceived as a larger rejuvenation project for the city," the jury stated.

Given the urban lake site, the vision is to present an innovative and sustainable inner city campus that exemplifies tropical design



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The author of the project aims to bring back some of the lost biodiversity to the city.

strategies in response to the hot, humid, monsoon climate while demonstrating the sensitive integration of nature and architecture. The main design strategy is to create two distinct programmatic strata by floating the academia above the lake and revealing a campus park below, which is the public interface and heart of the university.

The jury believes that the project will set a new benchmark for sustainability in Asia as the design remediates a natural area in the city, allowing both the university and the public to inhabit the site.



LOW YEN YEING | EdgeProp.my

Project authors from WOHA (from left) Hassell, Sim and Jalal Ahmed received the prize from head of jury of the Lafarge-Holcim Awards 2017 in Asia Pacific Donald Bates on Nov 23.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT PRIZES

Catenary Arches

Rayong, Thailand

Main author: Boonserm Premthada (architect) from Bangkok Project Studio, Bangkok, Thailand



Catenary Arches or the Ban Chang Town Hall is a community hub in a Thai village in Rayong which is designed to multiply opportunities for cultural and community activities in the village. The building is a series of concrete catenary arches curving in different directions. With an open-air design, it is intended to be functionally vague to host varied activities.

The jury enjoyed the playfulness of this surreal pavilion. They also appreciated that the community leaders and architect have worked together to gain support for the project from locals and the public sector.

Growing Grassroots

Parung, West Java, Indonesia

Main authors: Muhammad Kamil (architect) and Brahmastyo Puji (architect) from pppoooll, Jakarta, Indonesia



The project is a training centre for young farmers interested in organic agriculture in Parung, West Java. The training centre is mainly made of locally available materials such as bamboo, which the jury very much appreciated.

The jury also liked the effort of the organisation Urban Poor Consortium to build a training centre as a form of counterpoise to unrestrained real estate development that more often than not compromises agricultural land in favour of urban growth.

Maximize the Minimum

Beijing, China

Main authors: Yue Zhang (academic), Liying Wu (student), Peiming Li (student), Cong Nie (student), Mengxing Cao (architect), Yue Wang (architect) from Tsinghua University, Beijing, China, and Shimeng Hao (academic) from Beijing University of Civil Engineering and Architecture



Located in Beijing's west downtown district, Maximize the Minimum is an urban regeneration project of a high-density informal habitat in the Baitasi historic neighbourhood.

Instead of replacing existing buildings with new construction, the proposed scheme empowers local stakeholders and on-site residents to upgrade infrastructure and public services, while encouraging them to improve their housing and workshop units themselves.

The jury appreciated its aim to support the low-income populations in their effort to remain on site, as well as the methods used to identify the needs of inhabitants through door-to-door interviews and meetings. The responses were translated into the comprehensive upgrading proposal for the improvement of infrastructure, public services and living spaces.

Water Collective

Thecho, Nepal

Main authors: Miho Mazereeuw (director and associate professor), David Moses (research scientist), Aditya Barve (research scientist), Larisa Ovalles (research associate) and Hugh Magee (graduate student) from Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Urban Risk Lab, Cambridge, USA



The proposal is for a multi-functional public space to be built on the former site of a guest house that was destroyed during an earthquake in 2015. The project features a water tank as its centre to collect and store rain water, which is filtered into safe water for the community. Above the tank is a community space that can also be used as an emergency shelter.

This project is highly appreciated by the jury because the space is equally suitable for everyday life as well as times of crisis. The social and infrastructural solution is also highly transferable.

PICTURES BY LAFARGEHOLCIM FOUNDATION

NEXTGEN – WINNER: 1st PRIZE

Powered by the community

Low-rise, high density Participatory village transformation, Guming, Nanning, China

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About 20km west from Nanning, China lies a heritage village called Guming. “It is rather quiet and tired with the majority of the villagers made up of old people, because the younger ones have left the village to seek a better life in cities. The village’s lack of economic activities offer very limited job opportunities,” said Mengyuan Zhu, a student from Southeast University in Nanjing who had developed a design model for transforming and revitalising the village.

Zhu’s proposed design won first prize in the Next Generation category of the LafargeHolcim Awards 2017 for Asia Pacific. The Next Generation category is open to students and professionals of up to 30 years of age. This category seeks visionary projects and bold ideas, and gives young professionals public exposure and a platform to gain recognition.

Zhu and her team were determined to modernise the village by adopting the self-renewal pattern based on two aspects—independent involvement and community empowerment.

She explained that independent



An artist impression of Guming Village.

LOW YEN YEING | EdgeProp.my



Co-author Fei Yu and Zhu (right).

involvement focuses on the requirements of the villagers and encourages self-expression and public participation.

Meanwhile, community empowerment aims to optimise the industrial structure, strengthen the villagers’ sense of belonging and

improve their living and working environment.

“The final target is to accelerate the sustainable development of Guming village,” Zhu noted.

She emphasised the village’s unique characteristics and resources utilisation such as the Zhuang Culture, its herb forest, weaving and rammed earth construction, and encouraged more relevant activities to increase income, all of which will eventually enhance their quality of life.

She said a proposed herbal products experience centre, the ecological restaurant, the homestay and guest house, the centre for weaving, the culture museum, the farmers and flea market, and the tourist

centre are all part of the overall masterplan for Guming Village over the next 20 years.

The jury appreciated the delivery of how modernisation might evolve within the context of a rural village, without taking recourse to tabula rasa strategies.

The jury also like the fact that the project offers a discourse on how to bridge the gap between historic preservation and the need to modernise, as well as measures taken to promote a form of habitation based on low-rise, high-density structures as opposed to high-rise, high-density responses — that could well evolve as a transferable model for future urbanisation in general, whether in China or other regions of the world.

NEXTGEN – WINNER: 2nd PRIZE

The making of a genius loci

Sacred and Profane Water treatment infrastructure, Varanasi, India

Water is the source of all life. And in India, many depend on the 2,525km-long holy Ganga or Ganges River. However, the once-pristine waters are severely polluted. To this, architect Vedhant Maharaj has proposed to clean the polluted river through a national network of localised infrastructures.

“By implementing a network of rehabilitation infrastructures along the river at all polluting tributaries, a 5,000km-long infrastructural system, which adapts to various city conditions, is created,” says Vedhant, who is an architect with Rebel Base Collective, based in Johannesburg, South Africa.

At the LafargeHolcim Awards 2017 for Asia Pacific, Vedhant’s proposed design for such an infrastructure in the city of Varanasi, on the banks of the Ganges River in North India, brought home the second prize in the Next Generation category.

He said it will create a prototype that forms a catalyst for cleaning the whole river.

The Next Generation category is open to students and professionals of up to 30 years of age with emphasis on visionary projects and bold ideas.

According to Vedhant’s proposed water treatment infrastructure, the river water is filtered through a series of charcoal and plant gabion walls. It then enters a “safe-water” stream along the river’s edge. The design is a response to the heritage, vernacular, sacred and ecological conditions of Varanasi.

Meanwhile, the built form fits into the heritage fabric of the majestic millennia-old stepped promenade of the city by mimicking its sacred form. This respects Varanasi’s aesthetic quality and creates a gentle unimposing infrastructure into an old sacred city.

“The building responds to the changing conditions both spatially and systematically. Floating wetlands are accessible all year round when the building becomes sub-



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Vedhant’s proposed design attempts to treat the highly polluted Ganga River in India.

merged. The wetlands and gabions gain ecological efficiency over time as plants grow in them. The building ages in a way that allows it to merge into the natural heritage,” he says.

Also included at the site are a number of treated water bodies that facilitate safe and convenient consumption as well as the practical, recreational and ritual uses of water.

The jury said the proposal is not about the treatment of the highly polluted water, but most importantly “the making of a genius loci, uniting the sacred with the profane”.

The jury was also impressed with the skilful presentation of the project’s ideas and greatly appreciated the clarity and beauty of the submitted drawings that intelligently refer to Indian traditions while acknowledging the present.

The jury valued the author’s objective to regard infrastructure as more than a mere servant to utility — to be reclaimed as a truly public resource and thus a matter of design.

SPECIAL REPORT

The 5th LafargeHolcim Awards AsiaPac

NEXTGEN – WINNER: 3rd PRIZE

More than just a school

School Hub Vocational training facility, Ruteng, Indonesia

Taking on the challenge to design a school that functions more than a school has led young architects Andi Subagio, Danna Rasyad Priyatna and Theodorus Alryano Deotama at SASO, Jakarta, Indonesia to come up with an award-winning proposal for the vocational teaching and learning facility in Ruteng on the island of Flores in Indonesia.

Their proposed design offers to turn the town's existing temporary school barrack as well as the state's current educational curriculum into not just a vocational school but a community hub for the city, offering event spaces, a visitor centre and a testing ground for local construction materials, among others. The proposed project received the third prize in the Next Generation category of the LafargeHolcim Awards 2017 for Asia Pacific.

"The school currently produces 'batako' or bricks of poor quality. However, the people in the city [still] buy because there are no better options available.

"With the development of this school, both architects and contractors can increase the quality of



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(From left) Danna, Andi and Theodorus at the awards ceremony.

'batako' or bricks and set the quality benchmark for the whole of Ruteng," said Andi, who is the main author of the vocational training facility.

He added that flores bamboo is one of the best building materials in the world. "Unfortunately, it is rarely known and utilised due to

the lack of skills and knowledge.

"Hence, the development of this building will encourage a major use of bamboo materials to raise awareness among people.

"Furthermore, to share the functional skills with the people of Ruteng, the construction of the school will be based on an open participatory method," added Andi.

Noting that the school is currently managed by a non-profit institution with very limited funds, the architects believe that there is a need for the school to be self-sufficient by organising events on the school grounds.

"Following the rise in living standards, the city will also have increased demands for new building technology and public services, which the vocational school could supply. In addition, the school will generate well-educated young people who can contribute to better future city developments," said Andi.

The jury commended the young architects' ethical posture and their courage to engage with existing challenges where problems are perceived as opportunities to not only create a vocational school but also a centre strongly connected to the community at large.

The proposed structures explore local materials and assembly techniques, developed by both students and teachers to create a hub that could contribute to the town's economic long-term livelihood.

According to the jury, this is a project with a clear thesis and a strong conviction that architecture can play a role in community building.

The most encouraging feature of the project is the idea to empower local craftsmen, through education and vocational training, with a focus on sustainable construction and the promotion of local materials.

NEXTGEN – WINNER: 4th PRIZE

Restoring balance to the ecosystem

Meta(bio)lism Exploring resilient ecosystems, Taichung, Taiwan

Dashu town in Taichung, Taiwan is known for its high-quality clay or kaolin soil, which owes its formation largely to Gaoping River's erosion of the weathered rocks on the upstream banks of the river, moving downstream and eventually settling on the plains in Dashu.

However, the overdevelopment of Dashu town has encroached into the flood plains, and consequently embankments have to be built as protection from the routine floods from the overflowing Gaoping River.

"The embankments are highly problematic, not only because they are not able to efficiently halt the floods, but also because they obstruct the people from mining the kaolin soil efficiently and from developing a sustainable industry for the town," explains Tzu-Jung Huang, a student of Feng Chia University in Taichung City,

This has prompted the search for alternative proposals to the cur-

rent and future development of the clay-mining town by the river to which Huang has responded with a proposal called "Meta(bio)lism," which won the fourth prize in the Next Generation category of the LafargeHolcim Awards 2017 for Asia Pacific. This category emphasises visionary projects and bold ideas and is open to students and professionals of up to 30 years of age.

At a media presentation following the awards presentation on Nov 23, Huang said the objective of the proposal was to explore the relationship between human construction and natural ecosystems. Hence, in Meta(bio)lism, he has proposed an energy and resource re-use strategy as well as a masonry system that people can adapt under the effects of extreme weather, while creating new industrial opportunities for Dashu.

"The use of the performative landscape device in the proposal will not only redirect flood waters but also allow a more efficient and sustainable mining of the kaolin soil.



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Huang said the objective of the proposal was to explore the relationship between human construction and natural ecosystems.

"Through the intervention of Meta(bio)lism, the ecosystem will be restored to a sustainable balance over time, and people in Dashu will rediscover their relationship with nature — one that is both harmonious and prosperous," added Huang.

According to the awards jury, material stocks and flows are addressed at multiple scales, ranging from studies of local materials, such as clay, to the investigation of construction assemblies for roof structures at the building scale as well as examinations of urban patterns at the territorial scale.

The jury found that the project revealed a deep sensibility for social, technical and environmental concerns — all combined and transformed into a stunning research for an architecture of the future.

The jury was also impressed by the scheme's exuberant deployment of architectural and technical means — both analogue and digital — to explore a broad range of important themes related to sustainable construction.

BUILDING BETTER RECOGNITION

Where the focus is on the building process

Post-war Collective Colombo, Sri Lanka
Community library and social recuperation

Over the years, more than 200 projects worldwide have been recognised at the LafargeHolcim Awards. More than half of these winning projects have been built or are scheduled for completion soon.

To underscore the fact that the LafargeHolcim Awards is never just about building “castles in the air” but about tangible measures that can be taken to advance the science of construction, a new award has been initiated in 2017 — the LafargeHolcim Building Better Recognition award.

The award is given to a winning project from previous competition cycles which has been realised and has stood the test of time as a particularly successful example of

sustainable building.

The inaugural winner for Building Better Recognition Asia Pacific went to Robust Architecture Workshop, Colombo, Sri Lanka, for its project called Post-War Collective, a community library and social recuperation project. It was the Bronze winner of the Regional LafargeHolcim Awards 2014 for Asia Pacific and then emerged the Silver winner at the Global LafargeHolcim Awards 2015.

The main author of the project, Milinda Pathiraja, designed the community library in Ambepussa, Sri Lanka, which was then built with the support of former army personnel who were engaged in the nation’s civil war. It shows that “turning swords into ploughshares” can be realised even today. The construction methods were selected specifically to help transition

Milinda (below) designed a community library built with the support of former army personnel.



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members of the army to civil life. A regional army squadron, with the assistance of the local community, constructed the building.

The approach focuses as much on the building process as on the building’s physical aspects, to celebrate a specific understanding of sustainable architecture derived from the very structure of its making.

The library, completed in 2015, was the first LafargeHolcim Awards recipient to host its prize handover

ceremony in the winning building itself.

The jury was impressed that it outlines a set of tangible measures, ranging from the introduction of an educational programme to the deployment of particular construction techniques.

Today, the library is a reality for soldiers at camp and neighbourhood children alike. It is also the source of knowledge for veterans and the local community.

MALAYSIA’S SUCCESS

Giving joy through architecture

BY NATALIE KHOO

Designing a sustainable building comes with challenges, including the cost. One can expect to pay 5% to 15% more to build a certified green property before one can reap the benefits that can be translated into savings in water and electricity bills.

However, it is something that architect Datuk Ken Yeang and his firm T.R. Hamzah and Yeang just take in their stride as their designs, Yeang says, are green by default.

“It is in our company’s DNA. It is in our design process and second nature to us. We do super-green buildings automatically,” he shares.

However, sustainability is merely one element that influences their designs.

“Our work is primarily driven by our goal to give pleasure and joy to the users of the buildings we design, in their public realm. We seek to make people happy. If we are able to make their users and visitors happy, we have fulfilled our role as architects,” he explains.

Their passion is reflected in its projects including Suasana Putra-

Suasana Putrajaya’s main component is the central promenade, which aligns in an axis to the Millennium Monument — also designed by Yeang’s firm.



jaya, a mixed-use development at Precinct 2, Putrajaya, which earned Yeang the Bronze award at the LafargeHolcim Awards Asia Pacific in 2012.

Located along Putrajaya Boulevard, Suasana Putrajaya comprises two 14-storey blocks of offices, each with a 7-storey podium consisting of retail units and offices.

One of the project’s main components is the central promenade, which aligns in an axis to the Millennium Monument — also designed by Yeang’s firm — by the waterfront.

The promenade between both

towers consists of a landscaped plaza with wide green open spaces, seating pavilions, linear planting areas, relaxation zones and temporal event spaces. The goal is to provide a pleasurable public realm for people, Yeang explains.

The Green Building Index-rated building uses an experimental sunshade that is made from an outer glass-skin with a white fritted pattern that gives solar shading to the inner skin.

“The inner skin is vertical while the outer skin is faceted and shaped like the face of a diamond, which is a metaphor for the building’s con-

figuration. The white fritted design also reduces solar insolation into the building and has the traditional ‘songket’ pattern that provides the crucial Malay cultural link to an otherwise contemporary building,” Yeang describes.

The promenade’s shop fronts also have similarly-patterned extended shaded glass. “Informally-shaped planters lie amid the seating area while the landscaping was designed based on ecological studies of the locality’s native fauna and flora,” he adds.

The project is a showcase of sustainable responses to technological,

PICTURES COURTESY OF KEN YEANG



Yeang: It is in our company’s DNA... We do super-green buildings automatically.

environmental, socio-economic and cultural issues affecting contemporary building and construction.

What does Yeang hope to see in the Malaysia architectural scene in the next decade?

“There is immense talent in Malaysia. It will be great if the nation’s inherent talents get the world recognition they deserve. I see my role today as helping the existing architect profession and the young achieve due recognition. It seems it just requires engendering their self-confidence so they can fly,” he concludes.

Regional winners 2017

Asia Pacific

Gold

White Rabbit, home for marginalised children (India)

Main author(s)

Avneesh Tiwari and Neha Rane – atArchitecture, Mumbai, India

Silver

Microlibrary, learning centre (Indonesia)

Main author(s)

Florian Heinzelmann and Daliana Suryawinata – SHAU, Bandung, Indonesia

Bronze

Floating University, BRAC University campus (Bangladesh)

Main author(s)

Mun Summ Wong – WOHA, Singapore

Further author(s)

Richard Hassell and Sim Choon Heok – WOHA, Singapore; Jalal Ahmed – J.A. Architects, Dhaka, Bangladesh; Wolfgang Kessling – Transsolar Energietechnik, Munich, Germany

Next Generation

Asia Pacific

First prize

Low-rise, high-density, participatory village transformation (Nanning, China)

Main author(s)

Mengyuan Zhu – Southeast University, Nanjing, China

Further author(s)

Xing Yifan, Yu Fei and Pei Yifei – Southeast University, Nanjing, China

Second prize

Sacred and Profane, water treatment infrastructure (India)

Main author(s)

Vedhant Maharaj – Rebel Base Collective, Johannesburg, South Africa

Third prize

School Hub, vocational training facility (Indonesia)

Main author(s)

Andi Subagio – SASO, Jakarta, Indonesia

Further author(s)

Danna Rasyad Priyatna – SASO, Jakarta, Indonesia and Theodorus Alyano Deotama – Jakarta, Indonesia

Fourth prize

Meta(bio)lism, exploring resilient ecosystems (Taiwan)

Main author(s)

Tzu-Jung Huang – Feng Chia University, Taichung, Taiwan

North America

Gold

Grassroots Microgrid, bottom-up neighborhood planning (Detroit, USA)

Main author(s)

Constance C. Bodurow – studio[Ci], Detroit, USA

Silver

Stacked, modular midrise housing (Vancouver, Canada)

Main author(s)

Cynthia Wilson and Oliver Lang – LWPAC + Intelligent City, Vancouver, Canada

Bronze

Global Flora, net-zero greenhouse for Wellesley College (Boston, USA)

Main author(s)

Sheila Kennedy and Frano Violich – Kennedy & Violich Architecture, Boston, USA

Next Generation

North America

First prize

Cooling Roof, prototype for an evaporative roof for radiant cooling (Cherry Valley, California, USA)

Main author(s)

Georgina Baronian – Princeton University, Princeton, USA

Second prize

Relational Urbanism, protocol for agent-based neighborhood transformation (Vancouver, Canada)

Main author(s)

Jason Heinrich – University of British Columbia (UBC), Vancouver, Canada

Third prize

Synanthropic Suburbia, retrofitting residential neighborhoods (Markham, Ontario, Canada)

Main author(s)

Sarah Gunawan – University of Waterloo, School of Architecture, Waterloo, Canada

Fourth prize

Airflow Carving, climate control experiments for enhanced comfort levels (Boston, USA)

Main author(s)

Peteris Lazovskis – Harvard University, Cambridge, USA

Latin America

Gold

Hydropuncture, publicly accessible water retention and treatment complex (Mexico City, Mexico)

Main author(s)

Manuel Perló Cohen and Loreta Castro Reguera – Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), Mexico City, Mexico

Silver

Community Capital, neighborhood center in Paraisópolis (São Paulo, Brazil)

Main author(s)

Sol Camacho Davalos – Raddar, São Paulo, Brazil; Jonathan Franklin – Exxpon, São Paulo, Brazil

Bronze

Urban Circulatory System, sanitation system in informal communities (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)

Main author(s)

Eva Pfannes and Sylvain Hartenberg – Ooze Architects, Rotterdam, Netherlands

Next Generation

Latin America

First prize

Territorial Figure, tidal energy landscape (Punta Loyola, Argentina)

Main author(s)

Stefano Romagnoli, Juan Cruz Serafini and Tomás Pont Apóstolo – Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Córdoba, Argentina

Second prize

Clearwater Revival, public baths and sewage treatment plant (Cerro de Pasco, Peru)

Main author(s)

Boris Lefevre – Marseille, France

Third prize

Service Points, public facility towers (Córdoba, Argentina)

Main author(s)

Ángela Ferrero, María Augustina Nieto, María Belén Pizarro, Seizen Uehara and Lucía Uribe Echevarria – Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Córdoba, Argentina

Fourth prize

Revealing Infrastructure, multipurpose telecommunication towers (Medellín, Columbia)

Main author(s)

Alejandro Vargas Marulanda, Daniel Felipe Zuluaga Londoño and Iojann Restrepo García – Universidad Nacional de Colombia – Sede Medellín, Medellín, Colombia

Europe

Gold

Logistics Framework, adaptable structure for a garbage collection company (Brussels, Belgium)

Main author(s)

Ana Castillo, Jan Terwecoren, Lieven De Groote and Annekatrien Verdick – TETRA architecten, Brussels

Gold

Mix-City, urban integration of an existing concrete mixing facility (Brussels, Belgium)

Main author(s)

Wes Degreef, Ken De Cooman, Nicolas Coeckelberghs, Laurens Bekemans and Jasper Poesen – BC architects & studies, Brussels, Belgium

Bronze

Air Rights, zero energy development units on parking lots (London, United Kingdom)

Further Author(s)

Bill Dunster – ZEDfactory, London, United Kingdom

Next Generation

Europe

First prize

Ecommunity, converting a factory into housing (Lodz, Poland)

Main author(s)

Malgorzata Mader – Lodz University of Technology, Lodz, Poland

Second prize

Modern Sanctuary, monastery conversion for a behavioral addictions rehabilitation facility (Otyń, Poland)

Main author(s)

Jakub Grabowski – Gdynia, Poland

Third prize

Liquid Era, new spatial concepts for the city of the future (Kazan, Russia)

Main author(s)

Anna Andronova – Kazan State University of Architecture & Engineering, Kazan, Russia

Fourth prize

Slow Burn, fire cistern and forest shelter (Collobrieres, France)

Main author(s)

Frédéric Bouvier – Renens, Renens, Switzerland

Middle East Africa

Gold

Legacy Restored, religious and secular complex (Dandaji, Niger)

Main author(s)

Mariam Kamara – atelier masomi, Niger; Yasaman Esmaili – studio chahar, Iran

Silver

Weaving and Stamping, elementary school and craft training center (Ait Benhaddou, Morocco)

Main author(s)

Fatima-azzahra Bendahmane – Ecoactiva, Casablanca, Morocco

Bronze

Pavilion Re-claimed, adaptive reuse for refugee education (El Marj, Lebanon)

Main author(s)

Joana Dabaj – CatalyticAction, Tripoli, Lebanon; Riccardo Conti and Matteo Zerbi – CatalyticAction, London, United Kingdom

Next Generation

Middle East Africa

First prize

Brick-Works, brick kiln and incremental development project (Soshanguve, South Africa)

Main author(s)

Heidi van Eeden – University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa

Second prize

Recovering Aleppo, rubble recycling units (Aleppo, Syria)

Main author(s)

Nour Madi – American University of Beirut (AUB), Beirut, Lebanon; Jad Melki and Ghaith Abi Ghanem – GHAITH&JAD Architecture and Design, Beirut, Lebanon

Third prize

(In)formal Pattern Language, designing processes for informal settlements (Cairo, Egypt)

Main author(s)

Nada Nafeh – The American University in Cairo, Cairo, Egypt

Fourth prize

Steps of Amman, urban stair and library (Amman, Jordan)

Main author(s)

Noor Marji – German Jordanian University, Amman, Jordan