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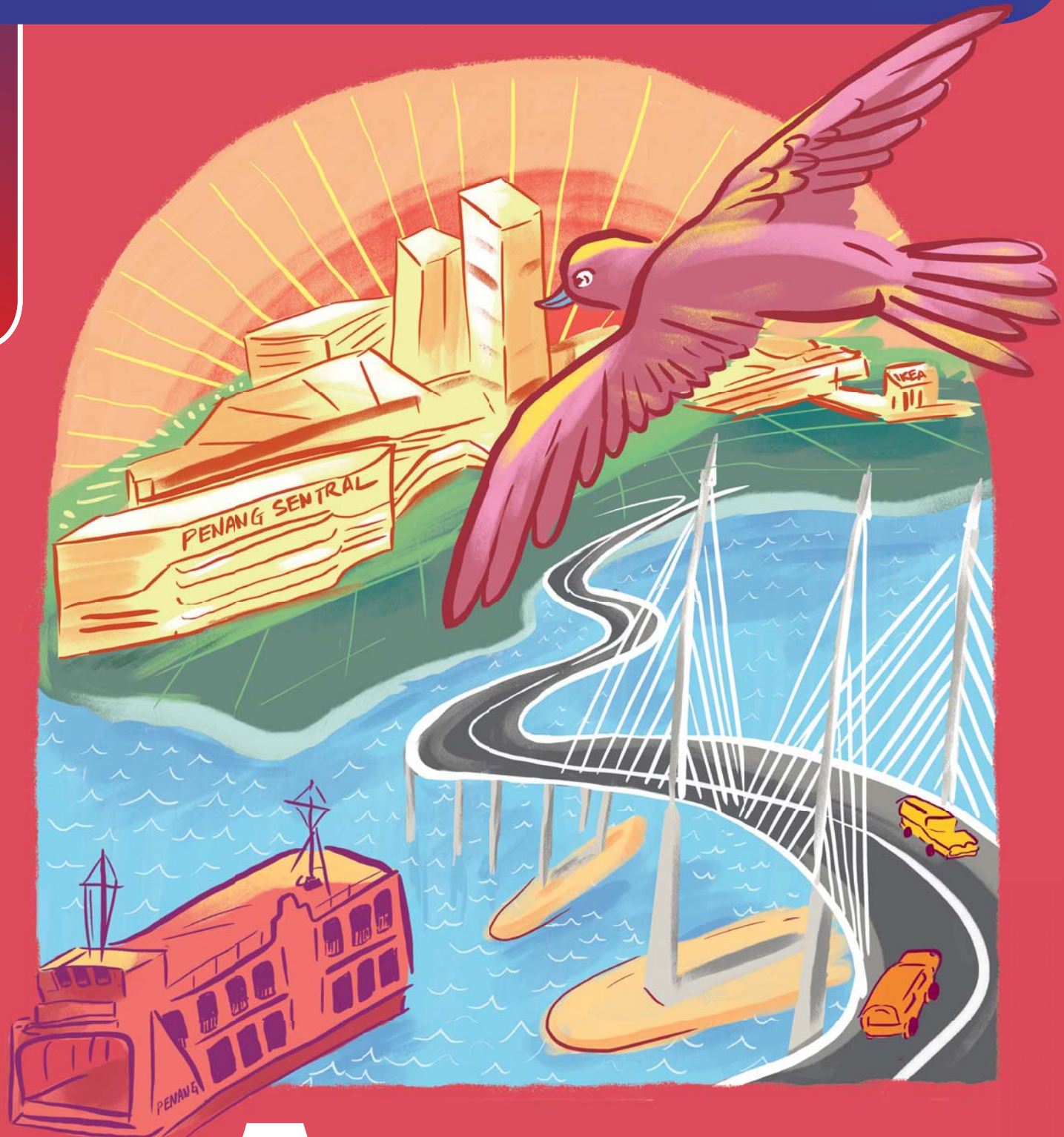
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**S P Setia's Avis 2 based on ideal M'sian home**

**National Community Policy to uplift the B40**

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# A new horizon

Often overshadowed by Penang island, Seberang Perai on the mainland is coming out of its shell. See Pages 6 and 7.

**NEWS**

# 'FundMyHome made my dream come true!'

BY **RACHEL CHEW**

**SEMENYIH:** Thirty-five-year-old Liao Tet Haw has finally fulfilled his long-time dream of owning a home — thanks to innovative property funding platform FundMyHome (FMH).

"I'm so excited to finally have a place to call my own!" beams Liao, who hails from Sabah. "I have always wanted to buy a property in West Malaysia where I have been working for years, Liao shared with EdgeProp.my after signing the sales and purchase agreement here yesterday.

Liao is buying a unit at the Harmoni Apartment at Eco Majestic, an up-and-coming township by Eco World Development Group Bhd.

The freehold 900 sq ft unit costing RM300,000 offers 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and two parking bays. Some of the common facilities provided include a function room, swimming pool, multipurpose court, children pool, playground and anti-climb fencing.

Although FMH is a newly-introduced platform, Liao said he is very positive and confident with the scheme as it collaborates with reputable developers in Malaysia.

"My friends and family members had asked if I really want to take the 'risk' because the FMH scheme seems too good to be true.



LOW YEN YEING | EdgeProp.my

**"It is not easy to get a bank loan. Without FMH, I probably can only continue to rent the unit I am now staying in and get nothing at the end of the day." — Liao**

"They said it could be a scam!" he recalled with a laugh. "I'm grateful that I made the right decision. Today, I am finally the owner of an apartment unit in Eco Majestic," he added.

Liao, like many other prospective homebuyers, had made several attempts but failed to get a bank

loan to buy his first home.

"I want to settle down in West Malaysia... It is not easy to get a bank loan. Without FMH, I probably can only continue to rent the unit I am now staying in OUG (Overseas Union Garden, KL) and get nothing at the end of the day.

"FMH has made my dream come true," adds Liao.

Under FMH, Liao just had to pay 20% of the purchase price of the Harmoni Apartment to move in. There is no need for a bank loan as the 80% of the purchase price is funded by institutions. Hence, Liao has no mortgage payments to worry about for the next five years at the end of which he would decide whether to own the entire 100% of the unit or sell it.

"Since Harmoni is already completed, I can do the renovation now and move in soon after the renovation is done. I'm ready to take up the 80% share of this unit five years later so I'm ready to invest money to renovate this unit," said Liao.

Launched two months ago, FMH enables a person to buy a property listed on the platform by paying 20% of the price. The remaining 80% will be contributed by institutions keen to fund the acquisition in exchange for a pre-determined yield and a share of the potential value appreciation of the home.

EcoWorld is one of the developers participating in FMH. The developer is exploring the possibility of expanding its portfolio of units on the platform.

*FundMyHome is powered by EdgeProp.my. Find out more at [www.FundMyHome.com](http://www.FundMyHome.com)*

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**LAUNCHES + EVENTS**

## 12th Malaysian Property Summit 2019

**Date:** Feb 21  
**Time:** 9am to 5pm  
**Venue:** Sime Darby Convention Centre, Kuala Lumpur  
**Contact:** (03) 6201 8200

What's the property market outlook for 2019? Find out at the annual summit organised by the Association of Valuers, Property Managers, Estate Agents and Property Consultants in the Private Sector (PEPS). EdgeProp.my readers stand a chance to win a free ticket to the summit worth RM988.

Log on to [EdgeProp.my](http://EdgeProp.my) to find out how.

**Sanctuary Fitness**

**Date:** Jan 20 (Sun)  
**Time:** 7.30am to 8.30am  
**Venue:** EcoWorld Gallery@ Eco Sanctuary, Lot 41296, Persiaran Eco Sanctuary, Teluk Panglima Garang, Selangor  
**Contact:** (03) 8688 2255  
Make time to work out regularly! To give you some motivation, spend this Sunday morning working out at Eco Sanctuary and get rewarded with an exclusive Sanctuary Fitness T-shirt.

**Seremban 2 CNY Bazaar**

**Date:** Jan 19 & 20 (Sat & Sun)  
**Time:** 10am to 5pm  
**Venue:** IJM Land Seremban 2 Sales Gallery, PT 10786, Seremban 2, 70300 Seremban  
**Contact:** (06) 761 3888

Organised by IJM Land Bhd, the CNY Bazaar will feature a CNY Cooking Demo by Astro DJ Yoon, shops, workshops and Chinese traditional cultural performances. A special property purchase promotion awaits.

**Fortune Favours the Bold**

**Date:** Jan 19 (Sat)  
**Time:** 11am to 12pm  
**Venue:** UEM Sunrise Showcase, 21 Jalan Kiara, Mont'Kiara, Kuala Lumpur  
**Contact:** 1-800-88-8008  
Start the New Year with tips from renowned Feng Shui expert Datuk Joey Yap in a special session on 'Feng Shui Strategies to Win in 2019' hosted by UEM Sunrise Bhd. The talk also offers a first-come-first-served free consultation.

**Feng Shui Numerology Talk**

**Date:** Jan 19 (Sat)  
**Time:** 1.30pm to 5pm  
**Venue:** Southbay Sales

Gallery, No 1, Southbay City, Jalan Permatang Damar Laut, Bayan Lepas, Penang  
**Contact:** (04) 291 3106  
Mah Sing Group Bhd has organised a Feng Shui Numerology Talk with master numerologist Marinah Ng who will tell you how you can attract wealth, success and health into your home in 2019.

**Setia's Yum Cha Treats**

**Date:** Jan 20 (Sun)  
**Time:** 11am  
**Venue:** Setia Ecohill Welcome Centre, Club 360, No 1, Persiaran Ecohill Barat, Setia Ecohill, Semenyih, Selangor  
**Contact:** (03) 8724 2255  
Join S P Setia Bhd at Setia EcoHill Welcome Centre to usher in the Lunar New Year with fun activities and treats such as an express manicure, express haircut, eyebrow shaping, angpow décor making workshop, and Chinese New Year calligraphy.



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# S P Setia's Avis 2 based on ideal M'sian home

BY NATALIE KHOO

BANGI: Property developer S P Setia Bhd is building more homes based on what Malaysians want as revealed in the findings of the Lafarge-EdgeProp MYHOME survey.

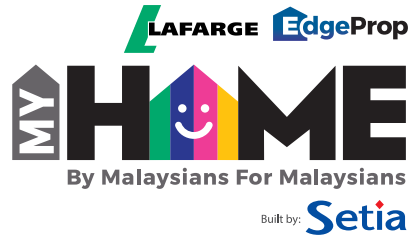
The survey was conducted from Feb 28 to April 15 last year to find out what makes the ideal home that Malaysians want to live in. Using the findings of the survey, S P Setia proceeded to design a phase of homes called Baccas at Setia EcoHill 2, Semenyih. The Baccas double-storey show house was unveiled on Nov 28 by the Housing and Local Government Minister Zuraida Kamaruddin.

The survey found that most Malaysians wanted terraced houses with three or more bedrooms and at least three bathrooms. They also desired a home of between 1,000 and 1,999 sq ft in built-up and priced between RM400,000 and RM600,000. Baccas ticks all these boxes as the unit built-up size is 1,652 sq ft, comes with four bedrooms and three bathrooms while the price falls just below RM600,000.

Following Baccas, the developer had in early January introduced the Avis 2 double-storey terraced homes at Setia Alamsari in Bangi. The 775-acre freehold Setia Alamsari township was launched back in 2007 by the then I&P Group Sdn Bhd which in 2017, merged with S P Setia.

Comprising 61 units, the Avis 2 homes feature a Scandinavian look. Each unit is on a 22ft by 80ft lot while unit built-ups are from 1,953 sq ft.

S P Setia general manager of niche development Soh Wai Fong told EdgeProp.my that Avis 2's specifications were very much inspired by the results from the MYHOME survey as the developer wanted to adopt as



many of the "wants" that Malaysians indicated in the survey.

"When we were finalising the design of Avis 2, it was just after the survey results were released," he said.

Taking into consideration that the living area and bedroom are the most important spaces for most Malaysians as indicated in the survey, each Avis 2 unit offers a sizeable living room downstairs with an open floor concept while the living room on the top floor has been omitted to create spacious bedrooms on the top floor.

Survey respondents also stated that the most important communal amenities for them were jogging trails (52.7%) and children's playground (51%) while the most important optional space is the garden (38.5%) which pointed to the fact that Malaysians enjoy their outdoor spaces.

"Avis 2 is a few steps away to pocket parks in the neighbourhood while the surau, kindergarten, community hall and football field are also nearby. We are also currently doing upgrading works on the landscaping as well as three existing lakes which have been left idle for a while now. Once the upgrading is done, residents can have evening recreational activities in the area," Soh added.

The survey results also showed that public transport such as MRT/LRT/KTM stations is the most important amenity outside the community (56.5%) followed by schools (55%).



LOW YEN YEING | EdgeProp.my



Top: An artist's impression of Avis 2.

Soh: Avis 2 is a few steps away from pocket parks in the neighbourhood.

Setia Alamsari is connected to major highways such as the PLUS highway, LEKAS highway and SILK highway while surrounding amenities include shopping malls such as Bangi Gateway and ECO Mall; educational institutions such as Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Sekolah Rendah Sri Al-Amin Bangi and SMK Convent Kajang and medical centres including the Kajang Hospital and KPJ Kajang Specialist Hospital.

"Just 2km away from the township is the UKM KTM station for those who want to take public transport as it leads all the way to KL Sentral," said Soh.

Avis 2 units are tagged from RM709,000 to RM1.03 million. The project will be completed in early 2021.

Currently the developer is in talks with the Kajang Municipal Council (MPKj) to upgrade the road from the station leading to the township while a link has just been completed recently that connects Setia Alamsari to Jalan Bangi Lama and Setia EcoHill, cutting travel time by 20 to 25 minutes.

"The new link will open anytime now, we are just waiting for clearance from MPKj," Soh added.

Other projects in the pipeline at Setia Alamsari this year include superlink houses tentatively priced from RM800,000 onwards, semidees, the first bungalows in the township and Rumah SelangorKu homes by the end of this year.

## National Community Policy to uplift lives of the B40

BY NATALIE KHOO AND SHAWN NG

KUALA LUMPUR: The government is set to launch the National Community Policy (NCP) next month to help transform the lives of the B40 group, such as those living in the People's Housing Projects (PPR).

Housing and Local Government Minister Zuraida Kamaruddin said the NCP would entail the government going to the ground to educate and engage with the rakyat. The objective is to empower the B40 in multiple ways.

To do this more effectively, the ministry is also working with the private sector and NGOs. One of the areas of improvement identified is proper property management of their living premises.

"The new government is very focussed on the B40 group. We believe that if we can improve the quality of life or standard of living of this B40 group, it will also raise the status of Malaysia to be that of a developed country. So, this is something that we want to do," she told reporters at a media conference after the launch of a property talk show at Wisma Bernama today.

"When I go down to the field and meet the B40 community, I always urge them to take care of the cleanliness of their houses and ensure the safety of the premises. Because when you want to upgrade or



Zuraida: It is important to ensure that the mission is successful.

move to a bigger house and sell the present house, it will give you a good price," she added.

Meanwhile, EdgeProp.my is spearheading a list of companies in the private sector, mainly developers, to help contribute towards the success of the NCP.

Last Friday (Jan 11), EdgeProp.my and some of the participating companies attended a meeting held at the ministry chaired by KPKT deputy secretary general (policy) Dr Mary Wong Lai Lin. Those present included representatives from Coun-



Representatives from EdgeProp.my and participating companies at the meeting on the CSR programmes under the NCP last Friday.

try Garden Pacificview Sdn Bhd, Gamuda Land, IOI Properties Group Bhd, Mah Sing Group Bhd, MKH Bhd, OSK Property, Paramount Property, SunSuria and Henry Butcher Malaysia (Mont' Kiara) who shared ideas on how they could improve the lives of the B40 group.

"The NCP is one of KPKT's initiatives to create a sustainable generation and community with the involvement of all parties," Zuraida told EdgeProp.my.

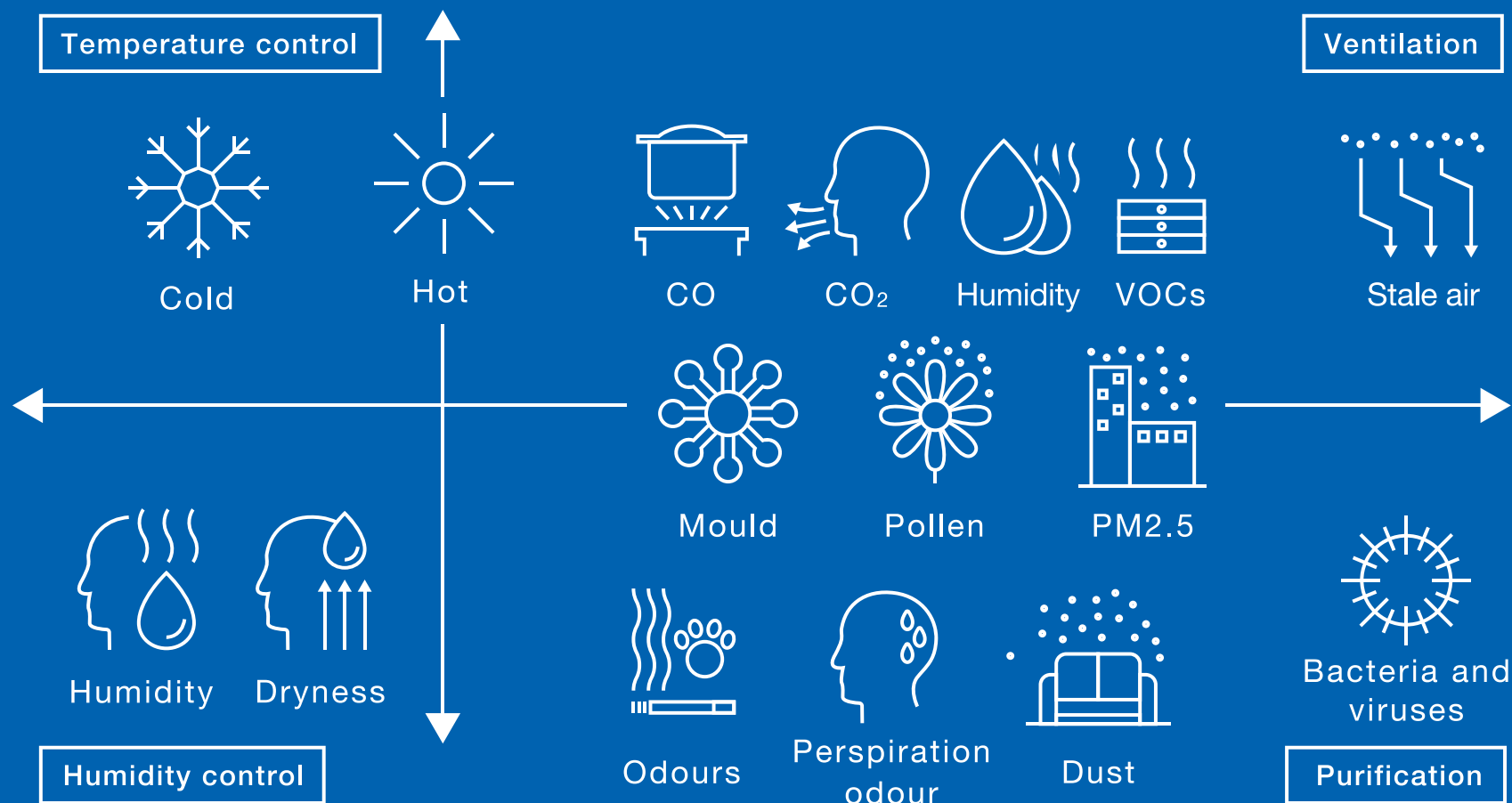
"It is important to ensure that the mission is successful; the government, public

and the private sectors work together for the development of society.

"This includes empowering communities with noble values and strengthening the spirit of unity among the populations within a community," she added.

The seven main clusters of the NCP are infrastructure and maintenance; cleanliness, environment and health; safety; education, awareness and skills; caring for the needy, elderly, women, children and disabled; social services; entrepreneurship and social business; and sports and recreation.

# Indoor air quality: The hidden threats



Time to pay attention to the air we breathe indoors, as there is more to it than meets the eye.

Air is such a vital component to our human existence. As we go about our lives, we barely notice our own breath as our lungs fill and empty repeatedly. The average person breathes in 18kg of air daily – much more than the 1.2kg water and 1.3kg food that we consume in a day.

Walking in and out of our homes, offices and buildings, we only notice the poor air quality when outdoors because we can see and smell the change in the air. Industrial smoke, emissions from vehicles, open burning in the neighbourhood and the much-dreaded annual haze are part and parcel of our daily lives.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) 2016 report, six million deaths were associated with outdoor and indoor air pollution. Exposure to air pollutants, especially fine particles, is a leading risk factor for non-communicable diseases in adults, causing ischaemic heart disease, stroke, chronic pulmonary disease and lung cancer, making air pollution the main avoidable environmental cause of diseases and premature death globally.

The importance of indoor air quality has largely escaped our attention. It is estimated that we spend about 90% of our time indoors, yet outdoor pollution receives a disproportionate amount of the focus.

Awareness of indoor air pollution is low among Malaysians, and as such, we often write off the smell of chemicals and paint in newly-completed buildings as normal. We do not think of the air in our bathrooms and kitchens, which are often areas with high levels of contaminants.

Interestingly, while we think our homes and indoor areas are somewhat pollutant free or have clean air, indoor air pollution bears the same negative effects as outdoor pollution. WHO cites evidence of links between indoor air pollution to diseases such as tuberculosis, cataracts, nasopharyngeal and laryngeal cancers. Poor indoor air quality has also been known to affect pregnant women and the

health and growth of children.

So what contributes to indoor air pollution? Unlike outdoor air pollutants that are often visible, sources of indoor air pollutants are various and insidious – stemming from chemicals in wood products and furniture, household chemicals, mildew, mould and bacteria. We ourselves contribute to indoor air pollution as the human body produces carbon dioxide and causes humidity. This is further compounded by outdoor air flowing inside and poor ventilation.

*The importance of indoor air quality has largely escaped our attention. It is estimated that we spend about 90% of our time indoors, yet outdoor pollution receives a disproportionate amount of the focus.*

Panasonic Malaysia's managing director Cheng Chee Chung notes that people tend to overlook indoor air quality, as it is something that "we cannot see". For instance, most of Panasonic's air-conditioning units have sensors and indicators of the air quality in a room, but it's still very difficult to convince people of their function.

"They think those indicators are not important," he said, adding there is a need to spread awareness about the importance of clean indoor air.

One way to ensure indoor air stays cleaner is to avoid cluttering the house while making sure that there is ample ventilation when cooking. Picking the right cleaning products

with no volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and good paint also plays a vital role in keeping good air quality at home.

However, key factors in maintaining quality indoor air fall into three categories: control temperature and humidity; lower indoor contaminant levels by exhausting air and/or supplying filtered fresh air; and mitigating particulate matter, viruses and odours.

In a bid to keep sickness at bay, it is important to maintain indoor humidity at around 40% to 60% which will also help to minimise dust mites and mould. These precautions may help prevent sick house syndrome, a medical condition that may be caused by inferior quality air within a house.

Even if air quality is generally good, proper ventilation is still a necessity. Exhaust fans and filters enhance the quality of air in rooms where they are utilised.

Panasonic offers various forms of applicable solutions, such as coupling air-conditioners with Energy Recovery Ventilator (ERV) system that exchanges air – expelling cooler indoor air, at the same time transferring energy to cool down incoming fresh but warmer air from outdoors, hence improving the efficiency of the air conditioner while ensuring constant flow of fresh air.

According to Cheng, air purifiers with Nanoe™ technology are recommended in addition to a filtration system, as bacteria may thrive in the air indoors. Due to the OH radicals in Nanoe™ particles, harmful bacteria and viruses can be inhibited rather effectively, even penetrating right to the level of fabric gaps.

Ideally, a complete and holistic indoor air quality solution that includes air intake, filtration, cooling, circulation, ionisation, exchange and exhaust is the way forward.

"The Nanoe technology is obviously more expensive but we try to keep that premium to a minimum so that people can accept it. If you don't invest a bit more for the equipment, you might end up paying more for medical bills. So, education is important," said Cheng, adding that it is important that all equipment is maintained properly at all times, for optimum results.



Cheng: If you don't invest a bit more for the equipment, you might end up paying more for medical bills. So, education is important.

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**Panasonic**



Ikea will be a major attraction for visitors to Batu Kawan.

# SEBERANG PERAI'S ATTRACTING THE YOUNG



BY TAN AI LENG

**S**eberang Perai on Penang mainland has gained the interest of property investors and homebuyers in recent years, made evident by the strong housing price growth recorded over the past six years.

Bordered by Kedah to the north and Perak to the south, the 751 sq km Seberang Perai boasts a number of new and major development projects that have and will continue to boost the local economy.

These developments include the 245-acre Aspen Vision City, Utropolis and the soon-to-be-open Swedish furniture store IKEA all located in Batu Kawan, Pearl City at Simpang Ampat and the upcoming 1,675-acre Setia Fontaines in Butterworth. There is also the highly-anticipated Penang Transport Master Plan (PTMP) which aims to enhance connectivity between Penang and the mainland.

Although some may attribute the housing price growth to investors motivated by future capital appreciation of the properties when the new developments and infrastructure are completed, PA International Property Consultants (Penang) Sdn Bhd executive director Michael Loo says demand has mainly been driven by home buyers from Penang Island and those from the Northern region of Peninsular Malaysia.

Malaysia Statistics Department data shows that the island and mainland population ratio currently stands at 54:46 or a population of 800,500 on the mainland and 946,200 on Penang Island.

Homes on Penang Island are becoming increasingly unaffordable for young homebuyers, pushing many to consider settling on the mainland where they can get large landed homes with lifestyle offerings at a lower price than on the island.

EdgeProp.my transaction data shows that in 2017, the average price for a double-storey terraced house on the island was around RM1.06 million or RM612 psf, based on land size, compared with those in Seberang Perai which was around RM355,088 or an average RM246 psf — a difference of 149%!

Besides the price factor, job opportunities are aplenty with many jobs created from the new catalytic projects on the mainland. This

## Housing transaction prices and volume in selected Penang mainland areas (2012 to 1H2018)

### Detached house

TOP FIVE AREAS (BY 2017 PSF PRICE)		AVERAGE TRANSACTION PRICE (PSF, RM)							TRANSACTION VOLUME						
		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	1H18	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	1H18
1	Perai	120	283	317	50	157	329	NA	4	2	7	1	4	1	NA
2	Butterworth	203	107	NA	90	181	303	NA	3	4	NA	5	3	1	NA
3	Simpang Ampat	74	88	63	NA	189	263	260	4	5	2	NA	2	4	1
4	Bagan Lalang	NA	259	221	224	271	244	NA	NA	1	1	2	4	2	NA
5	Alma	149	160	179	155	226	212	177	41	45	30	15	12	14	2

### Semidee

TOP FIVE AREAS (BY 2017 PSF PRICE)		AVERAGE TRANSACTION PRICE (PSF, RM)							TRANSACTION VOLUME						
		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	1H18	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	1H18
1	Sungai Puyu	218	293	281	172	352	344	362	3	19	3	5	1	2	4
2	Butterworth	269	256	208	193	302	302	337	15	8	8	10	6	10	2
3	Raja Uda	164	306	444	157	281	298	225	19	8	13	9	1	7	1
4	Bukit Tambun	127	143	168	195	251	286	476	8	11	10	7	5	2	2
5	Alma	141	178	180	203	232	236	229	90	113	83	68	89	106	34

### Terraced house

TOP FIVE AREAS (BY 2017 PSF PRICE)		AVERAGE TRANSACTION PRICE (PSF, RM)							TRANSACTION VOLUME						
		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	1H18	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	1H18
1	Raja Uda	326	370	393	422	451	423	282	99	79	45	40	36	37	12
2	Butterworth	217	260	306	268	386	368	394	142	123	85	70	51	45	28
3	Sungai Puyu	199	232	290	224	301	363	384	22	20	23	12	16	10	6
4	Bagan Lalang	238	258	302	289	372	361	364	25	26	12	10	15	12	3
5	Permatang Pauh	250	243	286	268	298	311	290	53	24	15	19	17	30	11

### Condominium

TOP FIVE AREAS (BY 2017 PSF PRICE)		AVERAGE TRANSACTION PRICE (PSF, RM)							TRANSACTION VOLUME						
		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	1H18	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	1H18
1	Butterworth	212	233	261	290	315	300	331	219	271	240	196	148	118	42
2	Bagan Jermal	147	168	254	224	NA	300	312	12	9	5	3	NA	3	1
3	Perai	156	198	223	257	267	281	NA	66	101	124	115	103	70	NA
4	Bagan Lalang	150	153	169	217	257	279	NA	11	24	16	9	6	6	NA
5	Bukit Mertajam	172	243	268	242	288	261	329	17	24	15	21	7	7	3

has led young adults from northern Perak, Kedah and Perlis to work here, and many have decided to purchase a home near their workplace.

The younger generation of local mainlanders who are looking for homes close to their siblings and parents are also supporting the demand for homes here, says Loo.

Penang-based Elite Properties Sdn Bhd senior negotiator Season Ting finds that enquiries for homes in Seberang Perai is rising with a majority looking for new terraced houses at affordable prices in areas with easy accessibility to highways and amenities such as Bukit Mertajam, Alma, Raja Uda and Batu Kawan.

### Prices climbing but still affordable

Although recent transaction volume has marginally declined due to a general weakening of the country's property market, Seberang Perai's housing prices have continued to climb over the past six years.

From 2012 to 2017, the average price appreciation of landed homes in Seberang Perai ranged between 49.6% and 53.8% while high-rise residences (excluding low cost flats) have seen their average transaction price surge 46% over the six-year period.

Terraced houses were the most popular although their transaction volume has declined to 1,608 in 2017 from 3,603 in 2012.

The average selling price of terraced houses in Seberang Perai rose by about 53.8% to RM246 psf in 2017 from RM160 psf in 2012. In the first six months of 2018 (1H2018), 642 terraced homes were transacted at an average price of around RM240 psf.

In 2017, some 623 semidee homes changed hands at an average transaction price of RM204 psf which was a 53.4% rise from RM133 psf in 2012. In 1H2018, 169 semidee houses were sold at an average price of RM212 psf. As for detached houses, their average transacted price increased 49.6% to RM169 in 2017 from RM113 psf in 2012. In 1H2018, there were 37 transactions which were sold at an average price of RM159 psf.



Meanwhile, the average transacted price of condominium/apartment units (excluding low cost flats) jumped 46% to RM257 psf based on built-up size in 2017 (with a total of 378 units transacted), from RM176 psf in 2012. The average selling price climbed further to RM281 psf in 1H2018 with 133 units transacted.

Henry Butcher Penang senior vice-president for asset valuation Shawn Ong said two- to three-storey terraced houses and semidees made up the bulk of residential properties launched in Seberang Perai over the past two decades. At least 70% of the mainland residential properties are bought by Penangites while about 10% to 20% are buyers who hailed from neighbouring states but work in Penang.

Although prices have risen over the years, the slowdown in the global and local economies as well as the rising cost of living have dampened the market in Seberang Perai lately.

“Potential buyers, especially property speculators are holding back given the uncertainties in both the global and local economies as well as the financing restrictions imposed by Bank Negara Malaysia. The high prices of newly-launched landed homes in established housing areas in Seberang Perai also do not help,” he explains.

However, genuine homebuyers are still looking to buy, hence Ong deems the overall take-up rate of existing and newly-launched residential properties in Seberang Perai as still reasonably healthy.

### Opening up to lifestyle and high-rise living

Besides the lure of work opportunities on the Penang mainland, the younger generation are also more open to lifestyle township developments and high-rise living.

“More are willing to consider condominium living as prices of landed properties especially terraced houses are becoming unaffordable to many mid-income buyers. Shrinking family size, demand for recreational facilities and better living quality as well as improved road accessibility are also encouraging many to consider high-rise living,” says Ong.

He foresees higher demand for condominium units in Butterworth, Perai as well as Batu Kawan in the near future.

Meanwhile, property developers have come up with holistic township developments with lifestyle elements, gated and guarded communities as well as recreational features that provide a safe and healthy living environment on the mainland. This concept has also caught the attention of many young homebuyers.

### Top locations

When it comes to investment locations, Batu Kawan is the firm favourite of property consultants due to its exciting offerings. PA International’s Loo expects this upcoming satellite town to be the most sought-after location for property purchasers in Penang.

“Batu Kawan is expected to be fully transformed within 10 to 20 years. The Batu Kawan Industrial Park (BKIP) has attracted big MNCs (multinational corporations) such as VAT, Honda and Sandisk. There are also mixed developments such as Aspen Vision City by Aspen Group, One Auto Hub by PKT Logistics, Utropolis by Paramount Property, IKEA Mall and Eco Horizon by EcoWorld,” he says.

Elite Properties’ Ting concurs that Batu Kawan has all the elements – industrial, retail, commercial, education and residential, to become a self-sustaining city in Penang.

Beyond Batu Kawan, Henry Butcher’s Ong sees opportunities for investors in matured areas in Seberang Perai Tengah, namely



Above: The newly completed Vervea commercial precinct at Aspen Vision City.



ELITE PROPERTIES

Ting: There are more and more enquiries from individual buyers and tenants looking for houses in Seberang Perai.

MOHD IZWAN MOHD NAZAM | THE EDGE



Ong: Seberang Perai has experienced a phase of modernisation over the last decade.

MICHAEL LOO



Loo: Residential property demand on the mainland is driven by young homebuyers from Penang island or the Northern region.



Left: Penang Sentral is a key transport infrastructure project for the mainland.

Perai, Seberang Jaya, as well as Alma and Rozhan in Bukit Mertajam.

Ong says each of the areas has its own strengths. For instance, Perai can benefit from the Perai Industrial Park and the newly completed Penang Sentral Transportation Hub – a transit-oriented development by Malaysian Resources Corporation Bhd. Meanwhile, Seberang Jaya has easy access as it is located close to the North-South Expressway Interchange and Sunway Commercial Hub. As for Alma and Rozhan in Bukit Mertajam, a wide range of amenities are offered, including the AEON Shopping Centre and Tesco Hypermarket, he says.

### Industrial development as catalyst

While much of the limelight has been on the more exciting lifestyle integrated and township developments on the mainland especially in Batu Kawan, there is no denying the fact that the industrial sector will continue to be the mainstay of the local economy.

Ong notes that over the last decade, the property market in Seberang Perai has experienced a phase of modernisation contributed by the growth in private sector investment in Penang mainland. This has generated new economic activities and demand for housing. Hence, more residential and commercial developments are expected to come up in Seberang Perai particularly in Seberang Perai Tengah (Bukit Mertajam, Bukit Minyak and Alma areas) and Seberang Perai Selatan (Batu Kawan, Simpang Ampat and Valdor areas).

“We foresee the industrial sector to continue being the main catalyst for the growth of the property market in Seberang Perai,” he says.

PA International’s Loo notes that Penang continues to be among the top two recipients of approved investments in the manufacturing sector after Johor, with the northern state receiving a total of RM10.8 billion in approved investments for the manufacturing sector in 2017.

As of today, more than 26 Global Business Services (GBS) companies have set up offices in Penang, either on the island or mainland. Among them are AMD Global Shared Services, AirAsia Global Shared Services, Citigroup, Dell and IHS.

The Penang government has also initiated six on-going industrial developments catering to different sectors, three of which are on Penang’s mainland.

These projects are: Penang Creative Animation Triggers @ George Town (2.3 acres), Penang BPO Prime in Bayan Baru (6.8 acres), Penang BPO Park in Bayan Lepas (74 acres), Penang International Technology Park (200 acres in Batu Kawan), High Value Manufacturing @ Batu Kawan Industrial Park (1,500 acres) and the Penang Education Hub also in Batu Kawan.

“The transition to Industry 4.0 requires huge changes and new skills not only within discrete functions, such as manufacturing, but also across the entire industry – touching almost every part of the supply chain. This latest industrial revolution will allow for greater changes in the Penang industrial arena and allow the Penang state to progress as a high-income economy,” notes Loo.

### Future needs

The vastness of land for township developments could be Penang mainland’s greatest advantage. However, lack of proper infrastructure and connectivity within towns and between the island and mainland could be stumbling blocks to investors.

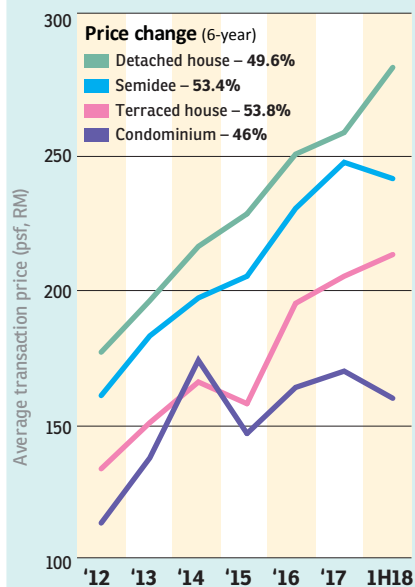
Elite Properties’ Ting opines that local authorities need to review current road networks and town planning to ensure every area in Seberang Perai is well connected, to allow every area to enjoy the spillover effect of upcoming growth and development.

Loo from PA International opines that the proposed light rapid transit (LRT) line from Penang Airport to Penang Sentral in the mainland would be the key infrastructure linking the mainland and Island.

“The rail transport system could alleviate the existing heavy traffic load on the Penang Bridge as well as boost the tourism industry, bringing tourists from the mainland to the island, or vice-versa,” he says.

Aside from the rail transport system, Henry Butcher’s Ong notes that Seberang Perai also needs to improve current amenities to embrace future needs. These include larger hospitals or medical centres, one-stop government agencies, recreational elements such as well-landscaped public parks and hotel choices for tourists.

## Penang mainland average transaction price trend



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