

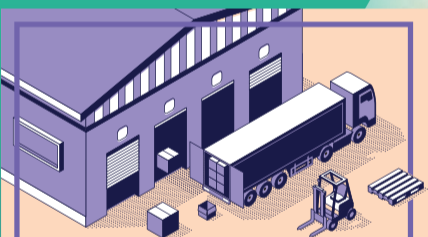
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A STRONG START

Zuraida Kamaruddin's thoughts on her first year in office as Malaysia's housing and local government minister

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PRIMA undergoes transformation

Perbadanan PR1MA Malaysia (PR1MA) said it is currently undertaking a transformation exercise to better fulfil its mandate and adapt to market conditions.

The business transformation is part of the strategy to ensure that the organisation is better aligned with the government's national housing agenda, said PR1MA in a statement on Wednesday.

Due diligence is currently being undertaken and is expected to be concluded in June, it added.

Acting CEO Mohd Nazri Md Shariff said the transformation exercise is expected to enable the affordable housing body to maximise the effectiveness of the change effort that is taking place within the organisation to further improve its business and operations.

ParkCity partners CapitaLand to develop premium Desa ParkCity condo

ParkCity Property Holdings Sdn Bhd (ParkCity) and CapitaLand Limited (CapitaLand) will be undertaking a 50:50 joint-venture development called Park Regent in Desa ParkCity, Kuala Lumpur.

Said to be built on one of the best locations in the township, the 5.6-acre freehold condominium development will comprise 505 units across two towers. The development will offer residents the opportunity to live by the waters of Desa ParkCity Lake with views of the parklands. The Park Regent is set to be launched in the third quarter of 2019, said the devel-

Gamuda Land inks MoU to bring in Malaysia's first luge attraction

Gamuda Land signed eight Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) for its Gamuda Gardens township in Sungai Buloh, Selangor last Friday, including one with New Zealand's Skyline Enterprises to bring in the first luge attraction to Malaysia.

Comprising the Skyline Luge and Skyline Zoom Ziplines, the attraction is to be built on a 30,000 sq m hill site overlooking the township.

MoUs were also inked with Beaconhouse for the establishment of a Beaconhouse International School with completion targeted for September 2022. The full list of MoUs also include 7-Eleven, Mr DIY, Petron, Arena Legacy, Ecocana Sports and Weddings by Emma.

"We are delighted that Skyline Enterprises, an iconic brand with



global operations, has chosen Gamuda Gardens for their first foray into Malaysia.

"Complementing the leisure component of our master plan will be our RM4.3 billion Gamuda Gardens City Centre which will also include a one million sq ft regional retail mall," said Gamuda Land CEO Ngan Chee Meng in

his opening address at the MoU signing ceremony at the Gamuda Gardens Experience Gallery.

"There is no date set for the completion of the luge yet. But, we are looking at about a couple of years for this," said Skyline Enterprises CEO Geoff McDonald at the press conference after the signing ceremony.



opers in a press release on Tuesday.

ParkCity Group CEO Datuk Joseph Lau said the joint-venture with CapitaLand brings together the experience, expertise and proven track record of two major property developers in the region.

World's first Hasbro water theme park to be in Melaka

Meridian Bhd executive director Datuk Seth Yap on Tuesday unveiled

plans to develop the world's first Hasbro water theme park at Meridian's Malaysia Tourism City (MTC) development in Kuala Linggi, Melaka, through a Hasbro licensing agreement secured by his private entity M101 Holdings Sdn Bhd.

At the official launch of the 622-acre MTC on Tuesday, Yap symbolically signed a licensing agreement with Hasbro Live! (Hasbro) regional director Natalie Chan to pave the way for the plan.

The Hasbro water theme park is part of the first phase of MTC which also includes a weekend market and an adventure park, according to Yap.

With an estimated investment of some RM120 million, the first phase is expected to kick off by end-2019.

trending NOW**LAUNCHES + EVENTS****Official launch of YOU CITY III****Date:** May 11 & 12 (Sat & Sun)**Time:** 10am to 6pm**Venue:** YOU CITY III Sales Gallery, VG-01 & VG-02, Jalan You City, You City Cheras, Cheras, Selangor
Contact: (018) 311 6000

OSK Property will be launching the final phase of You City in Cheras this weekend. This transit-oriented development will feature 800 serviced apartments and a 3-storey hybrid mall. Prices for the apartment units start from RM350,000.

Funtastic Parents Day**Date:** May 11 (Sat)**Time:** 11am to 5pm**Venue:** Trio By Setia, Lot No 82623, Jalan Langat / KS06, Bandar Bukit Tinggi 1, Klang, Selangor
Contact: (03) 3162 3322
S P Setia Bhd is organising a special appreciation

day for parents with activities such as family workshops, exciting game booths, and head and shoulder massages.

Home Fair at Eco Grandeur**Date:** May 11 & 12 (Sat & Sun)**Time:** 11am to 6pm**Venue:** Eco Ardence Sales Gallery, Lot 6232, Persiaran Mokhtar Dahari, Bandar Puncak Alam, Selangor
Contact: (03) 3270 2525

Whether you're setting up a new home or looking to upgrade your current one, this is one event you should check out. Up to RM15,000 worth of prizes are also up for grabs while the first 50 walk-ins are entitled to a mystery gift.

A Floral Mother's Day Celebration**Date:** May 11 & 12 (Sat & Sun)**Time:** 10am to 8pm**Venue:** Sunway Citrine Hub, Sunway Iskandar, Persiaran Medini 3, Bandar Medini Iskandar, Johor
Contact: (07) 509 6575

If you are looking for a place to

spend quality time with your mom this Mother's Day, join in the fun at Sunway Citrine Hub. Take part in exciting activities with your mom. Register at <https://forms.gle/4pCuWVHHC8EXWfgu7>

**Dim Sum Delights****Date:** May 11 & 12 (Sat & Sun)**Time:** 11am to 3pm**Venue:** Tropicana Metropark Property Gallery, No 1, Jalan Delima 1/1, Subang Hi-Tech, Subang Jaya, Selangor
Contact: (1700) 81 8887

Join Tropicana Corp Bhd to enjoy a mouth-watering dim sum meal at Tropicana Metropark this weekend. Everyone is invited.

Quayside Wonderland with Luxura**Date:** May 11 & 12 (Sat & Sun)

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If you have any real estate-related events, email us at editor@edgeprop.my. Events listed here will also appear on www.EdgeProp.my.

Time: 4pm to 10pm
Venue: twentyfive.7 Property Gallery, Lot 43495, Persiaran Oleander, Telok Panglima Garang, Selangor
Contact: (016) 299 1610
Join Gamuda Land this weekend to experience mesmerising magic shows, exciting performances, gastronomic delights, kids' fun workshops and even a cinema under the moonlight! Bring your family and friends and be sure not to miss the newly launched Luxura show unit.

Mother's Day Special**Date:** May 11 & 12 (Sat & Sun)**Time:** 12pm to 6pm**Venue:** Damansara Avenue Sales Gallery, Jalan Persiaran Perdana, Bandar Sri Damansara, Kuala Lumpur
Contact: (1800) 88 8082

Organised by TA Global, the event will see a myriad of creative and fun activities for the whole family to celebrate Mother's Day. From bespoke floral arrangements to hand drawn caricatures, there's something for everyone.



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Ascott aims to be largest hospitality company in Malaysia

BY SHAWN NG

PETALING JAYA: The Ascott Ltd (Ascott), CapitaLand's wholly-owned lodging business unit is striving to become the largest hospitality management company in Malaysia – one of its key markets in the Southeast Asian region.

“We are the largest hospitality management company in the Philippines and we hope to replicate that in Malaysia,” said Darren Cher, Ascott country general manager for Malaysia.

Currently, it is the largest international serviced residence operator in Malaysia with a total of 4,102 serviced apartment units across 18 properties in the country.

In line with Ascott's expansion goals, the group is currently exploring options with a couple of property developers in Malaysia and some things could materialise this year.

The group is also planning to expand in Malaysia with new hotel brands that were recently acquired.

Striving to become a full-fledged lodging provider, Ascott ventured



Cher: As a company, we need to constantly innovate and change with our customers while growing our segments.

into the Indonesian hotel market last September with the acquisition of a 70% stake in TAUZIA Hotel Management, one of Indonesia's top five hotel operators.

“We no longer see ourselves as just a serviced residence operator as we wanted to become a full-fledged lodging [provider], so entering the hotel [business] was a natural extension of where we

were, considering our clients can stay from one night to one year and above,” said Cher.

“The world is changing and the market is very dynamic. As a company, we need to constantly innovate and change with our customers while growing our segments. We can no longer just target the long stays and corporate clients as we need to target anywhere from the

middle class travellers to millennials as well as those who want different lengths of stays,” he told EdgeProp.my.

He said there are six hotel brands under TAUZIA, namely Harris Hotels, Fox Harris Hotels, Yello Hotels, Préférence, Harris Vertu Hotels and POP! Hotels and each brand covers a different market segment from millennial and middle class travelers to business-class and high-end travellers.

“Currently, TAUZIA has 10,000 keys in Indonesia with another 10,000 keys under development. Their projects outside Indonesia is pretty limited. Apart from a 30-room hotel dubbed Liu Men Melaka, there is a Harris Vertu Hotel and a Harris Hotel in Nha Trang, Vietnam that are being developed,” he added.

Luxury boutique hotel Liu Men Melaka had its soft-opening in March, and is under the Préférence brand.

Ascott is going to expand the Préférence brand hotels while bringing the other TAUZIA brands into Malaysia. The group believes

all six brands present opportunities in the Malaysian market.

For instance, the mid-tier brands of POP! And Fox Harris will allow the group to enter secondary cities in Malaysia, said Cher.

“So far, our focus was on the big cities. These hotel brands will allow us to penetrate secondary cities where there is a demand for travel, but do not expect the kind of rates one would pay in Kuala Lumpur,” he elaborated.

“We hope to at least see one or two projects materialise this year,” he continued, adding that potential areas could be Petaling Jaya, Shah Alam, Subang Jaya and the areas along Jalan Bukit Bintang in Kuala Lumpur.

He pointed out that Ascott wants to create operating synergy and economy of scale by combining its hotel and serviced residence brands to forge a “combo product”.

“We can actually have projects where we fit two brands in one. For example, it could be a Citadines serviced apartment combined with a Yello Hotel, where the former caters for mid-to-long stays while the latter caters to the short stays,” he said.

PROPERTY CHAT



‘Redevelopment must have consent of all owners’

The National House Buyers Association (HBA) read with consternation recent articles in which the Federal Territories Minister said that the government is looking at an urban redevelopment/renewal law, while seeming to ignore the unconstitutional impact such a law will have on homeowners in Malaysia.

Little does he seem to realise the far reaching implications such a law will have on Article 13 of the Federal Constitution, and the principles of indefeasibility of title as enshrined in the National Land Code which the Federal Territories are bound by. We hope the FT Minister is not swayed by the whisperings of commercial-minded developers, hence this ‘mulling of a proposed law to govern redevelopment or renewal’.

En bloc strata sale

This ‘redevelopment or renewal’ law is likely another name for the impugned ‘En Bloc Strata (forced) sale’ proposal, first put forth by developers 10 years ago.

En bloc strata sale is where a certain piece of land with buildings erected on it is identified for acquisition by commercial developers. A developer will approach owners and persuade them to part with their property in consideration for, perhaps, the market rate of said property. Upon obtaining the land, the original buildings are demolished to make way for a new development, likely a mixed development with residential and

BY DATUK CHANG KIM LOONG



commercial buildings priced high above the original rate of the demolished buildings.

Sans authoritative findings and conclusions, the original buildings are termed dilapidated or unsafe. The issue of certification by the Local Council as ‘condemned building’ thus arise and precede.

The aim as perceived by HBA is the forceful acquisition of certain commercially situated land area. Forceful, because an en bloc sale/redevelopment/renewal law only upholds the might of the majority. What about the constitutional rights of those who do not wish to dispose of their property even with considerable compensation because they have lived there their entire lives?

Less ‘pros’ and more ‘cons’

The FT Minister identified Singapore as an example where this law was enacted. Minority owners there were given replacement units on the renewed and redeveloped land itself and not in some far-off tertiary location. However, the success stories do not highlight the plight of the minority owners (who are often the old and infirm, who have stayed in the same area for decades) in coping with the forced hardship of adapting to new surroundings. Does the FT Minister actually care?

Singapore and Hong Kong are ranked as the world's 3rd and 4th most densely populated countries respectively. Malaysia is ranked 112th, based on the projections of the United Nations in 2015. While en bloc sale is arguably a necessary evil in land-scarce Singapore and Hong Kong due to the pressing need for urban redevelopment, this argument is not relevant for Malaysia.

Land Acquisition Act

The Land Acquisition Act, which we now have, has prescribed reasons and procedures in place to ensure any forceful acquisition is undertaken with consideration of the interests and opinions of all the owners and not a mere majority. Reasons prescribed are confined to those for the ‘benefit of the public’ and not for commercial interests.

We also have the Strata Management Act 2013 (SMA) that provides for contributions by the owners to the Maintenance Account and the Sinking Fund Account in strata schemes so that strata buildings can be properly maintained, refurbished and upgraded without falling into dilapidation.

It is justified to redevelop strata developments for urban renewal using either the current Land Acquisition Act or the SMA which is in line with Article 13 of the Federal Constitution and section 340 of the National Land Code to protect the rights of homeowners rather than apply law more suited to countries that are land-scarce.

Being old is not a crime

Homeowners should have the freedom to decide how to redevelop their housing schemes without a law that allows the majority and third parties (commercial developers, government or political entities) to override the constitutional right of minority homeowners who may be old, infirm, have no living relatives or a voice. Older people often have difficulty adapting to living in a new place.

Does this proposed law envision the rights of the minority should the minority want to be compensated with a replacement home on the same site after redevelopment without having to pay for said unit, and that all expenses for temporary accommodation be borne by the developers?

There is no valid justification to support this proposal. HBA's stand is that any redevelopment/rejuvenation/renewal must have the consent of all owners. Current laws are sufficient for renewing dilapidated buildings without sacrificing the interests of owners.



Datuk Chang Kim Loong is the Hon. Secretary-General of the National House Buyers Association (HBA). HBA can be contacted at:
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Malaysia's industrial and logistics market to benefit from BRI

BY NATALIE KHOO

Would you believe that of all the countries in Southeast Asia, Malaysia has received the largest amount of investments from

China over the past 10 years?

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), or One Belt One Road as it was formerly called when it was first launched in 2013, is China's platform for multilateral cooperation which will create new economic links and improve its business networks across the globe. This will ultimately lift infrastructure in Southeast Asia through new ports, railroads and highways. The question is, how will it benefit Malaysia?

According to global real estate consultancy Knight Frank in its latest research report titled "New Frontiers: Prospects for Real Estate Along the Belt and Road Initiative", Malaysia is the only other Southeast Asian country to make it to the top 10 of the Knight Frank Belt and Road Index (BARI).

The BARI ranks 66 BRI-related countries by their economic potential, demographic advantage, infrastructure development, institutional effectiveness, market accessibility and resilience to natural disasters.

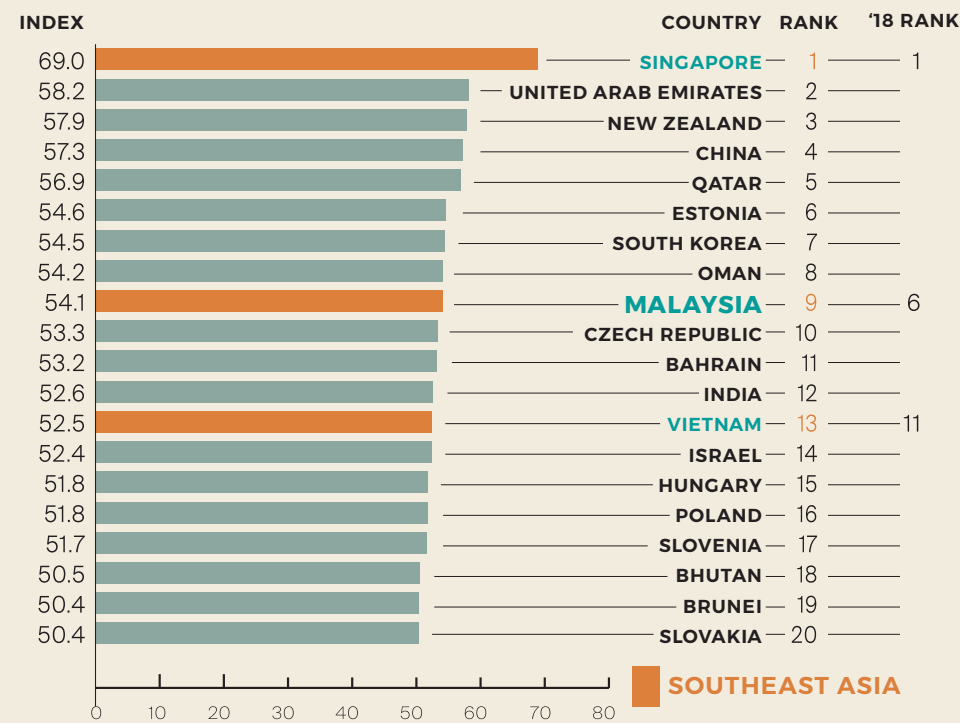
"Although Malaysia's position has dropped to ninth place from sixth last year, it is not a reflection of the changes that happened in Malaysia but more in recognition of the three countries which have moved up - Oman, South Korea and Estonia. Malaysia has been a major beneficiary of Chinese capital with investments totalling US\$43.8 billion (RM181.61 billion) over the past 10 years," Knight Frank Asia Pacific head of research Nicholas Holt tells EdgeProp.my.

Among the recent major Southeast Asian BRI deals in Malaysia are:

- the US\$1.3 billion undersea tunnel to link Penang island to the mainland whereby the new mainland link will benefit the real estate markets in George Town and Butterworth where tunnel entrances are located;
- the US\$1.9 billion deep sea port which forms part of the Melaka Gateway project which is expected to result in increased trading activities from the new port which in turn will stimulate warehousing and logistics facilities demand;
- and the US\$2.1 billion railway project which forms part of the East Coast Rail Link set to contribute to economic opportunities in east coast states and likely to benefit the overall real estate sector.

Holt explains that the BRI's immediate impact will be seen in the industrial and logistics market in Malaysia as new ports such as the Melaka Gateway will see immediate

Belt and Road Index 2019 Top 20 countries



SOURCE: KNIGHT FRANK RESEARCH

Detached factory rents 4Q2018 (RM per sq ft/month)



SOURCE: KNIGHT FRANK RESEARCH



"The BRI topic was widely discussed back in 2017 but things slowed down a bit in 2018 everywhere in the world including Malaysia." — Holt



LOW YEN YEING | EdgeProp.my

demand for the land surrounding the ports, pushing prices up as supply stays the same.

"We expect developers to develop the surrounding area and what we believe is that pricing will tend to head upwards. Not only that, it will benefit other tertiary industries as you will need office workers to support the economy around the shipping [industry] which will then lead to further demand for office space, residential, retail and so forth.

According to Knight Frank Malaysia executive director of capital markets Allan Sim, following the change of government in May 2018, a number of Chinese investments and projects, especially mega infrastructure projects have been deferred.

"However, the presence of Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir and Malaysian business delegates at the recently concluded second Belt and Road Initiative Forum for International Cooperation in China, coupled with his intention to expedite the setting up of a one-stop centre (OSC) to ease foreign investment-related approvals, have given some assurance and confidence to Chinese firms to reconsider investing in Malaysia.

"Furthermore, with new agreements set for the revival of the ECRL and the mega Bandar Malaysia development in Kuala Lumpur, Chinese firms will certainly be looking more seriously at Malaysia again and the industrial segment will benefit the most," Sim adds.

Knight Frank, he says, expects more high-tech manufacturers from China to operate in Malaysia, taking advantage of the country's adequate supply of raw materials, coupled with relatively low operating costs.

"Moreover, Chinese firms can utilise Malaysia as a manufacturing hub as products manufactured in this nation are insulated from tariffs from most major economies, such as the likes of the US, Latin America and European Union," he offers.

Ultimately, Holt says the BRI will not only benefit the Chinese but will change the shipping dynamics of Malaysia, bringing it a notch higher.

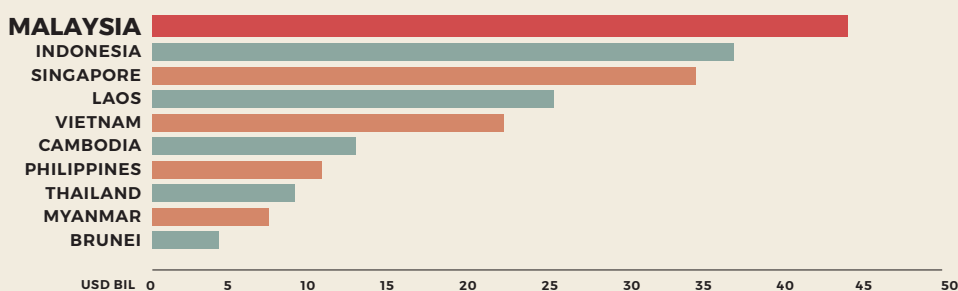
"If you look at the shipping statistics, Malaysia is bypassed at the moment but with Melaka having the deep sea port, you will definitely see the logistics business growing from there. When you have strong connectivity, companies will tend to gravitate towards [you] as you are tapping into the right supply chain," he says, citing Johor as example where improved infrastructure coupled with planned upgrade of port facilities, the industrial and logistic sector is now attracting high level of interest among investors.

The report states that the current market rents for factories / warehouses within Johor ranges from RM0.80 to RM1.50 psf per month, which is on par with the major industrial zones in Selangor.

Knight Frank Johor branch head Debbie Choy says the good air and maritime connectivity in Johor, established infrastructure namely the Senai International Airport as well as the Johor Port and the Port of Tanjung Pelepas, have supported the state's vibrant logistics industry.

"Johor has always been an attractive destination among Chinese investors. In fact, China is among the largest investors in Iskandar Malaysia since its inception in 2006, especially in the manufacturing sector. Moving forward, Johor is well positioned to capitalise on the continuing strong bilateral relations between China and Malaysia," says Choy.

Chinese investments (all sectors) Past 10 years



SOURCE: KNIGHT FRANK RESEARCH & THE AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE

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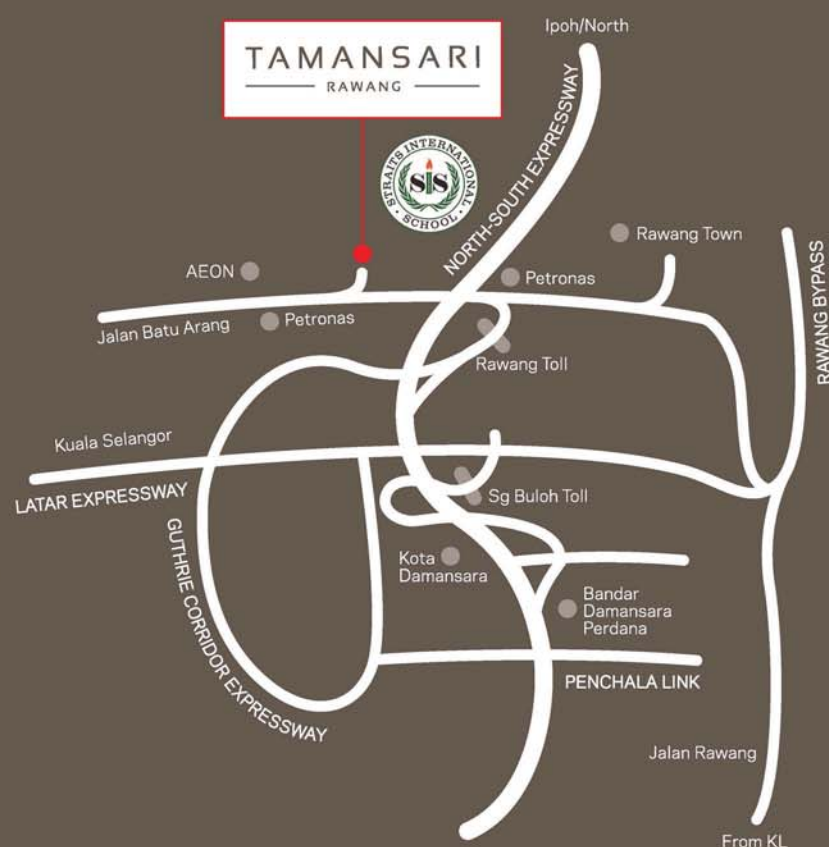
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Sunway's Build-Own-Operate model for sustainable development

For Master Community Developer Sunway Property, the adoption of the Build-Own-Operate (B-O-O) model has proved to be a successful strategy for its township developments.

Its flagship Sunway City Kuala Lumpur is the best example of the implementation of the B-O-O model. The award-winning integrated township consists of seven components — universities, a medical centre, a shopping mall, hotels, multipark attraction, offices and residences, all served by Malaysia's first elevated Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), and they are all built, owned and operated by the Sunway Group.

Each component complements the others and is seamlessly connected via various main roads and highways as well as a 4.8km elevated canopy walkway that enables pedestrians to access the various facilities within the township on foot.

The various components not only serve its residents but they have opened up business opportunities, creating a vibrant township.

Even after 45 years, the 800-acre integrated Sunway City Kuala Lumpur remains vibrant with a population of 200,000 including 40,000 students. It also attracts about 42 million visitors a year.

Sunway Bhd property development division central region executive director Chong Sau Min stresses that sustainability is something the company practises across its real estate value chain so that the communities that they build can continue to thrive in the future.

"We adhere to our B-O-O business model which makes us co-invest with the communities we build as its largest stakeholder," he adds.

Sunway Property has six core competencies which include land bank acquisition, master planning and design, construction and supply chain management, marketing and sales, property investment and business operators, and real estate investment trust (REIT) and REIT management. These core competencies allow it to execute its B-O-O business model successfully.

This business model is especially useful when it comes to township master planning as it means that



Chong: We adhere to our B-O-O business model where we co-invest with the communities. This model enables us to remain as stakeholders within the communities we build.



Wong: We wanted to develop Sunway City Ipoh as a new tourist destination for Perak, specifically for Ipoh.

Sunway Property can ensure the sustainability of its townships, says Chong.

Under the B-O-O model, Sunway retains a 30% to 50% stake in the assets within its townships including Sunway Iskandar and Sunway City Ipoh, so that it can continuously recycle capital and manage the integrated townships to deliver growth for its communities.

"Being the largest stakeholder within these communities allows us to reinvest our profits for perpetual growth — such as infrastructure and facilities upgrades, so that we can ensure that our property purchasers can enjoy sustainable property appreciation," Chong elaborates.

SUNWAY CITY IPOH — THE LIMESTONE CAVES AS INSPIRATION

About 200km north of Sunway City Kuala Lumpur lies Sunway City Ipoh, Perak. Located right before the exit to Ipoh off the North-South Highway, is the view of the lush greenery and the imposing limestone caves that serve as an inspiration to Sunway Group founder and chairman Tan Sri Dr Jeffrey Cheah AO.

Spanning about 1,350 acres with a GDV of about RM5 billion, Sunway City Ipoh epitomises resort living with a wide range of lifestyle features.

"We wanted to develop Sunway City Ipoh as a new tourist destination for Perak, specifically for Ipoh. We wanted to develop the area as a catalyst for more intensive growth for the Eastern Development Corridor of Ipoh City, which is based on tourism, recreation, institutions of higher learning and agro-business while preserving and enhancing the natural environment in the vicinity," says Sunway City Ipoh's executive director Wong Wan Wooi.

Sunway's presence has brought sweeping changes to life in this part of Perak. The infrastructures within and around the township are constantly improved while employment opportunities are created through Sunway City Ipoh's own hospitality, retail, leisure and education business components with robust support that amplifies tourism growth.

The development which began in the late 90s has seen Sunway City Ipoh augment sustainability both economically and environmentally, which is evident



Sunway City Ipoh epitomises resort living with a wide range of lifestyle features.



Sunway City Kuala Lumpur is the best example of the implementation of the B-O-O model.

from the preservation of the area's pristine forests and natural beauty.

Sunway City Ipoh is close to the heart of Tan Sri Dr Jeffrey Cheah AO as he hails from Perak and is keen to accelerate Ipoh's socio-economic transformation.

Sunway City Ipoh is thriving today, and has attracted various food and beverage franchises, budget hotels, light industries and small- and medium-sized enterprises to set up here.

"In the future, Sunway City Ipoh will have several exciting projects including Sunway Medical Centre, Sunway Education, Assisted Living, a shopping mall and serviced apartments that will tap onto the natural hot springs in the township," Wong adds.

Indeed, plans are afoot to develop Asia's first residences with natural hot springs "in the sky", namely Sunway Onsen Suites which will capture the beauty of the hills, rivers and greenery.

This full-service residential development will be part of a 31-acre development comprising the Lost World Mall, serviced apartments, retail shops and a riverside boulevard.

REPLICA OF SUNWAY VELOCITY FOR PENANG

In Penang, the B-O-O model has helped in making the "Bandar Sunway" in Seberang Jaya a well-received commercial hub with notable capital appreciation.

Sunway Perdana, a 49-unit commercial development within the vicinity, has definitely proven Sunway's B-O-O has brought catalyst to the surrounding area with an increase of 272% capital appreciation based on the last transacted price of RM3.1million in 2016 compared to its first launch in 2010.

"As a Master Community Developer, we commit to co-invest and grow alongside our community. This B-O-O concept enables us to enhance and upgrade to cater to the needs of the community from time to time," says Sunway Penang senior executive director Daniel Lim.

The RM500 million expansion of Sunway Carnival Mall which started in March 2018 to increase its net lettable area (NLA) to 1 million sq ft from 500,000 sq ft is expected to complete by the fourth quarter next year.

Besides, the second phase of upgrading and refurbishment of the existing Sunway Carnival Mall building is also in the pipeline and targeted to complete by 2022.

Lim notes that there will be a new 180-bed Sunway Medical Centre of RM300 million gross development cost adjacent to the Sunway Hotel Seberang Jaya which is targeted to complete in Q4 next year to provide quality medical care to the nearby community.

Meanwhile, the second development with B-O-O business model is Sunway Valley City in Penang island - a 25-acre integrated development at Paya Terubong.



The 1,800-acre Sunway Iskandar comprises six well-crafted precincts.



Sunway Valley City in Penang comprises a wide range of lifestyle features that rejuvenates the Paya Terubong area.



Lim: The B-O-O model enables us to enhance and upgrade to cater to community needs.



Soosay: With the B-O-O model, we want to make Sunway Iskandar one of the most liveable cities in Southeast Asia.

"This will be a replica of Sunway Velocity (in Cheras, Kuala Lumpur), which will also be another benchmark of Sunway's B-O-O development on Penang Island with proposed components of commercial retail shops, serviced apartment, offices, a rehabilitation hospital, a shopping mall and an education component," says Lim.

SUNWAY ISKANDAR AS NATURE'S CAPITAL CITY

Education is the cornerstone of Sunway communities and Sunway Iskandar in Johor Bahru is home to the Sunway International School Sunway Iskandar — the first school in the region to offer the Canadian International Baccalaureate programme.

This is also the second Sunway International School after the first Sunway International School in Sunway City Kuala Lumpur.

The 1,800-acre Sunway Iskandar is crafted into six beautiful precincts, namely The Marketplace, The Capital, The Parkview, The Lakeview, The Seafont and The Riverside.

"We aim to build Sunway Iskandar with the same vision which is to create a thriving community. The first development that we brought in to Sunway Iskandar was the Sunway International School in the Lakeview precinct, because our founder Tan Sri Dr Jeffrey Cheah AO believes that education provides the optimum route out of poverty.

"Next, we started with the first mix development which is the Sunway Citrine Residence which comprises residential, offices and mall. Our offices were fully sold out within a week when we first launched back in 2015 and our mall which now has 97% tenancy was open in January last year," says Sunway Iskandar CEO Gerard Soosay.

Following the success of Sunway Citrine, Sunway Iskandar has launched the Sunway Citrine Lakehomes, which is just 500 meters from the seafont and Sunway Grid, the first build-and-own development in the Marketplace precinct.

Currently, the on-going developments include a 500,000 sq ft Sunway Big Box Village which will be the first large format retail village in Malaysia and a hotel to support the influx visitors who will be here.

To complement the residential and retail offerings, Sunway Iskandar will be introducing a unique leisure component, a 32-acre XPARK, right next to the Sunway Big Box Village. The adventure park will have a variety of activities such as kayaking, Go-kart, paintball, wall climbing, ATV, glamping and more.

"As we develop each precinct, we are planning to build an integrated development to create a sustainable and liveable township with 40% greenery here in Sunway Iskandar. Next will be the Riverside precinct," he emphasises.

To help raise the community spirit in the township, the developer organised events such as Movie Outing Day, Viper Challenge as well as Race for a Better Planet, in conjunction with World Environment Day.

In every integrated township, Sunway always ensures good connectivity. Sunway Iskandar is conveniently accessible via the Coastal Highway Southern Link.

"With the B-O-O model, we want to make Sunway Iskandar one of the most liveable cities in Southeast Asia and we look forward to growing our community in Iskandar into a world-class community," Gerard adds.

Sunway's B-O-O business model is a testament to its thriving townships and developments across the nation. It crafts a journey for Sunway to continue building more integrated, liveable and sustainable communities wherever they set their foot on.

SUNWAY
PROPERTY
Master Community Developer



“An A” for effort

BY TAN AI LENG

During a Grab car ride from KL Sentral to our office in Mutiara Damansara recently, the driver asked us where we worked and when told that we were from the property portal EdgeProp.my, he began a conversation on the current Malaysian property market that lasted the entire 20 minute-ride. What caught our attention was the high praise he heaped on the country's first woman Housing and Local Government Minister Zuraida Kamaruddin and the work she has done including the policies that the ministry has introduced thus far.

"She knows her portfolio and what she's doing. Instead of targeting the upper income class, she is taking care of the lower and mid-income groups who make up the majority of the country's taxpayers," said the young 30-something Malaysian who said that he is an opposition party supporter but that he remained impressed by Zuraida's fortitude in dealing with housing issues.

Even in Parliament, the Iron Lady of Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) has been winning compliments from the opposition bench as well. It was reported that a few Opposition Members of Parliament were impressed with her performance in answering the tough questions aimed at her ministry during the Q&A sessions in Parliament. They were also glad that she decided to proceed with the PPR (People's Housing Projects) which had been approved by the previous housing minister. It is indeed rare to see politicians in Malaysia openly giving compliments to a member of an opposing party.

On top of that, Zuraida is known for her hard work and commitment to her portfolio. She probably has one of the busiest schedules amongst ministers, often packed with back-to-back meetings in between officiating events and other scheduled work.

One meeting she had with EdgeProp.my in September last year was at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport VIP departure lounge at 12 midnight before she departed overseas!

Despite her busy schedule, she always has time to comfort others. For instance, in September last year, Zuraida visited a family who had just suffered the loss of a 3-year old girl after she fell to her death from her home on the 17th floor of the PPR flats in Kota Damansara.

In November, Zuraida rushed to the hospital to be with the families of six rescue divers from the Fire and Rescue Services Department who drowned in a mining pond in Puchong following a failed rescue attempt.

Self-appraisal

When asked to rate her performance in her first year in office, Zuraida confidently gave herself a score of 8 out of 10.

"It's very hard to rate myself as there are various aspects to the work, I'm not all the time 'A' or all the time 'D'. But for now, I think I'm on track with my plans and in delivering what the people expect the housing ministry to do.

For my almost one year performance, I would give myself an 8, based on my performance in solving problems, responding to all kinds of situations and setting priorities," she tells EdgeProp.my in her Putrajaya office on April 18th.

Although she never imagined being a minister, least of all the housing minister, the moment she was given the post, she was committed to doing her best, the way she has been committed to her task as the Ampang MP.

"I have no regrets, be it for the last one year or for my past 61 years of my life. I am happy with what I have achieved and will continue to do more," says Zuraida.

"KPKT (Housing and Local Government Ministry) is the pulse of the nation as it handles problems related to housing for the people, local government, waste management, firefighters and rescuers as well as housing demand and supply. These are all the components of nation building. I told my staff that, and told them to be proud of what we are doing as we are part of nation building," she enthuses.

“
I have no regrets, be it for the last one year or for my past 61 years of my life. I am happy with what I have achieved and will continue to do more.”

— ZURAIDA

”



CLICK/TAP HERE
to watch a
video interview
with Zuraida.





Improving strata living

To say it has been a busy and hectic year for Zuraida since she was sworn in as minister last May would be an understatement.

The past 12 months have just been a warm-up for the 61-year old minister, and a chance to kick-start new projects and policies. Moving into the second year, she wants to delve deeper into the issues and seek solutions to the housing problems in Malaysia.

One of them will be to reform the Strata Management Act and to empower the Commissioner of Buildings (COB), says Zuraida, because post-development is an important aspect of housing to create a safe and quality living environment for the people.

“Over 75% of the people who are now staying in high-rise strata property are facing a lot of problems in communal living, from cleanliness and safety, to the upkeep of common spaces. But there are missing links between current laws and enforcement to effectively handle the problems (in strata living),” she tells EdgeProp.my.

Hence, KPKT is now looking at reviewing the Strata Management Act and the COB structure to make the laws and regulations easier to understand by all income groups as well as to simplify the decision-making process by Management Corporation s(MC) or Joint Management Bodies (JMB).

This, says the minister, is also in line with the National Community Policy (DKN) that was launched by KPKT in February this year which aims to improve the living environment in public housing and housing for the B40 group in collaboration with the private sector. EdgeProp.my is facilitating the collaboration between KPKT and the private sector for the corporate social responsibility programme under the DKN. It has also created a dedicated website to raise awareness and educate the public about the policy and the needs of PPR residents.

“There are some missing links in the handling of communal living issues in stratified properties. On one hand the COB is not empowered while on the other hand the Strata Management Act is quite complicated to most people,” says Zuraida.

As a result, when issues such as maintenance fee collection arise, a decision is difficult to be made and action can’t be taken.

Higher income residents will probably have extensive knowledge in property management, they also have the financial capacity to engage specialists to handle strata-related problems for them, but for the lower income group, they may lack knowledge and resources, she says.

Things get even more complicated, she adds, when a developer hands over the development to the JMB or MC, hence, it is important to educate every strata property resident on the laws and regulations related to communal living.

The surprise appearance of Zuraida at one of the bazaar booths during the launch of the National Community Policy.

Zuraida's first day in office in May 2018.

However, the review of the Strata Management Act — to make it easy to understand by the man-on-the-street — as well as the restructuring of the COB's role and to place it under KPKT's management, will need some time to realise.

“I have started the ball rolling. Currently we are organising workshops and forums for all stakeholders to help them understand the issues. I hope that by the end of next year, I could complete the study and present the paper to the cabinet and seek Parliament's approval,” explains Zuraida.

Reviving abandoned projects

Abandoned housing will also be a focus of the ministry this year. The first case she is hoping to close is the infamous Highland Towers project.

This condominium project in Ulu Klang has been abandoned for 26 years after the deadly landslide in December 1993 which led to the collapse of one of the three towers, killing 48 residents.

Soon after the news that the ministry would be redeveloping the site, Zuraida says the owners of several condo units who were not contactable previously had come forward and negotiations are now in progress.

Once permission is secured from all owners, Highland Towers will be torn down and the site will be redeveloped into a proposed recreational park with 50 bungalows around it.

“After Highland Towers, I'm going to look into other abandoned projects. During my trip to Rantau in Seremban, I saw a lot of abandoned hotel projects along the road to Port Dickson. This is such a waste. If they are developed, it could generate more business opportunities to the locals,” she notes.

According to the National Housing Department, as of June 2018, there were a total of 254 abandoned projects in Peninsular Malaysia with Selangor

having accumulated 82 followed by Johor and Negeri Sembilan, which has 44 and 25 abandoned projects, respectively.

However, she adds, to revive the abandoned projects in Malaysia requires time. The current laws may need to be reviewed, while cooperation with local governments is needed to simplify the overall redevelopment process.

M40 will be the next focus

Being the first woman housing minister and taking on the position when the property market is down, all eyes in the industry are on Zuraida's every move.

The problem is in considering the different wish lists of the various stakeholders. For instance, industry players wanted more to be done to stimulate the quiet market while homebuyers are hoping for even easier ways to own a property.

For now, Zuraida has taken a firm position to prioritise the needs of the lower income group, especially the B40 group. The policies launched by KPKT include the National Housing Policy (DRN) 2018-2025 and the National Affordable Housing Policy — a sub-policy under DRN — in January 2019, as well as the DKN which focuses on the needs of the B40 group.

However, Zuraida has also expressed concern for the mid-income M40 group and promises that there will be more policies to look after the housing needs for the lower M40 group soon.

“We are looking at the financial mechanism, to find more accessible financial packages to make the process (of owning a home) easier for the B40 and M40 groups. We are also looking at other options, for instance, the FundMyHome or Rent-to-Own schemes (RTO), which could help them own a home,” she notes.

CONTINUES ON PAGE 13





Dear minister, not bad at all for your first year!

Zuraida (fourth from left), Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his wife Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali during the launch of the National Community Policy in February this year.



PICTURES BY LOW YEN YEING | EdgeProp.my

BY EDGEPROP.MY

You see her in the news almost every day. Not just once but several times per day, she is quoted in articles talking about matters related to the Housing and Local Government Ministry (KPKT). It is undeniable that the Housing and Local Government Minister Zuraida Kamaruddin is one of the hardest working ministers we have today.

In a street poll of 20 people, conducted by EdgeProp.my recently, most said they were satisfied with Zuraida's performance and are looking forward to more announcements from the ministry this year.

The 20 respondents, aged between 22 to 71 years old include students/young graduates who are interested in owning a home, homeowners looking for a second property, retirees, property investors, real estate negotiators and business owners.

Of the 20 respondents, 15 said the minister has carried her role as minister well over the past year. The rest opined that it is too soon to judge, and that more time was needed to observe the impact of the policies and measures introduced thus far.

Thumbs up for housing policies

The majority lauded Zuraida's efforts in promoting affordable housing and in encouraging homeownership for the lower income group. They also welcomed the National Home Ownership Campaign (HOC) which was rolled out in January and will continue until June.

One of the respondents, who only wanted to be identified as 'John', said the HOC has benefited many young

homebuyers, including his son who has just purchased a unit during the HOC at a 10% discount with other freebies included.

"I think KPKT has been very active ever since Zuraida took over last May. From the policies she initiated, I feel she is a sincere minister that really wants to ease the challenges in the property market, such as pushing for more affordable homes and launching the six-month house-buying campaign to clear existing stock in the market," said the 58-year old businessman.

However, 12 of the people polled said the policies and measures announced by the new minister lacked details and as such, had failed to make an impact.

"For example, I was happy when I heard that they promised to build one million affordable homes and that more financial packages for the lower income group will be initiated. They announced schemes such as DepositKu, but there are still so many details that have not been finalised about the scheme yet," said 30-year old marketing communications executive Tang Chin Huey.

Loan rejections

Many prospective home buyers have complained about loan rejections hindering them from getting their dream home. As many as eight people polled raised this issue with six of them noting that housing prices are far beyond what they can afford right now.

A commodity trader who declined to be named said loan rejections are the main reason many young Malaysians who are in the lower M40 group are unable to own a home while 67-year old retired teacher Karishnan said affordability is the main

challenge for the B40 or M40 purchasers today and hopes KPKT can come up with some sort of mechanism to tackle the issue of rising house prices.

"She (Zuraida) also needs to work hand-in-hand with stakeholders such as Bank Negara Malaysia to achieve her goals that were pledged to the rakyat. Otherwise, she will have a very tough time and her good intentions may not be successful," he added.

Please don't forget us

Although the minister's focus on the B40 group has won some hearts, other groups of homebuyers and property investors are also clamouring for attention.

One person said she was impressed by Zuraida's focus in helping the B40 group and first-time homebuyers but as an upgrader who is looking to move out of her apartment, she felt a bit left out by government as someone who was looking for a bigger house for her growing family.

"I am a mid-income earner and I want to look for a landed home for my family in the Petaling Jaya area which is close to my office, but houses here are too expensive for me. It would be great if upgraders could get some perks or tax incentives when buying their next property after selling their current house," said the 46-year old accountant.

Meanwhile, Woon, a 55-year-old manager who owns a home which he rents out for income was concerned about Pakatan Harapan's promise of one million houses in ten years as well as the Rent-to-Own (RTO) concept which the ministry is encouraging as it might cause an oversupply of affordable homes and worsen the

current stagnant rental market.

"I am not a speculator, I am just renting out one of the houses I bought using my hard-earned money for stable income when I retire. If the market is flooded with affordable homes and RTO homes, it will have a negative impact on property owners who rent out their units," added Woon.

Also sharing the same concern of oversupply is 60-year old trader Ben Chua.

"A healthy market needs a variety of property choices, but if current policies overemphasise first-time homebuyers, it will dampen investors' sentiment in the Malaysian property market," he said.

Quality senior living

Interestingly, a few people polled raised the issue of a lack of attention for senior living. They were concerned about the aging population in the country and reckoned that there is a need for the government to set some basic rules and regulations to ensure senior living facilities are included in a property development or community.

"My husband and I plan to downsize to a serviced apartment but we have found that current high-rise residential developments have neglected the needs of senior residents. There are so few senior-friendly facilities and design features in current condominium and serviced apartment projects, such as pathways for wheelchair access and panic buttons.

"Also, as a senior, I don't really use the common facilities such as gym or swimming pool. Personally, I prefer green spaces and areas where I can relax and spend time with my neighbours," said a 60-year old retiree.



Easing homeownership with attainable financial packages

FROM PAGE 11

Besides working with Bank Negara, she is also in talks with foreign investors including from China and Korea, to obtain funding support for the RTO schemes.

According to her, there are seven companies that are interested to invest and may sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with KPKT soon.

Meanwhile, the National Mortgage Corporation — Cagamas is also looking at introducing a shared equity scheme to provide alternatives to people who want to own a home.

She points out that developers have the capital to build the houses desired by the homebuyers but purchasers can't afford the houses and have difficulties in securing loans.

In some cases, the people who could afford monthly instalments could not get a loan due to insufficient income supporting documents or credit track record. Because of this, the minister is looking at various ways to encourage homeownership through alternative funding schemes such as the FundMyHome+DepositKu scheme which was unveiled in February this year. The pi-

lot scheme aims to ease homeownership among the B40 group.

FundMyHome enables a first-time homebuyer to buy a home by paying only 20% of the purchase price. The balance 80% will be funded by institutions. Under FundMyHome+DepositKu, the same homebuyer, if eligible, will receive a loan of RM30,000 from the government to help with the 20% payment. As a result, the homebuyer who wants to buy a RM307,000 home will only need to pay RM31,400 to own the home. If the buyer is eligible for the 7% bumiputera discount, then he or she only needs to pay RM9,910.

Most recently, Zuraida went to Beijing, China with Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad at end-April to participate in the Belt and Road initiative. During the trip, she learnt more about the Industrial Building System and waste management business and technology.

It is obvious that Zuraida has taken to her role as housing minister like a duck to water, and we can only wish her all the best in the days ahead and to keep up the good work.



EdgeProp.my managing director and editor-in-chief Au Foong Yee (second from left), followed by The Edge Media Group chairman Datuk Tong Kooi Ong and Zuraida with the Eco World Development Group Bhd team at the launch of the FundMyHome+DepositKu scheme.

Rehda: Thank you for listening and your willingness to make changes

BY TAN AI LENG

HARIS HASSAN | THE EDGE

The Real Estate and Housing Developers' Association (Rehda) lauded Housing and Local Government Minister Zuraida Kamaruddin's willingness to listen to the needs of stakeholders in handling the various housing and development issues.

Rehda president Datuk Soam Heng Choon says the minister had taken cognizance of the association's input and wish list that was sent to the government in May 2018.

"The ministry has been working on addressing some of the highlighted issues for the past one year. For instance, in addressing the affordable housing issue, the ministry has already launched the Dasar Perumahan Negara 2018 – 2025 and placed all overlapping agencies handling affordable housing under her ministry," says Soam.

Another move by the ministry that has benefitted the mass market, adds Soam, is rolling out the national Home Ownership Campaign (HOC) which encourages homeownership and provides a platform for developers to market their unsold units.



Soam: We are hopeful that the journey towards better governance and transparency will continue.

Besides that, the ministry has also commenced the process of setting up a Central Housing Database which will consolidate data from multiple agencies at the federal, state and local government levels.

Soam believes that this database will help both planners and developers to make more informed decisions in building the right product, with the right pricing, in the right location at the right time. It will also facilitate decision-making when it comes to industry guidelines and policies, he adds.

In improving the rental market, he notes that the ministry is also formulating a robust Rental Tenancy Act which could help facilitate

Rent-to-Own Schemes as well as improve protection for both owners and tenants.

However, there are still many issues that need to be addressed between the federal and state governments; such as reducing the costs of doing business which will ultimately be transferred to homebuyers.

According to Soam, this could be achieved by reducing compliance costs and land premium as well as all development charges.

"Having a unified approval process that will reduce development time will translate to cost savings," he says.

He notes that there should also be a common bumiputra quota policy and a transparent release mechanism, as unsold units attract high holding cost which will ultimately be passed on to buyers.

"We understand that resolving all issues at one time is impossible. However, we are hopeful that the journey towards better governance and transparency will continue and we at Rehda are always supportive of policies and initiatives that will make housing affordable and the industry more robust."

PEPS: Other ways to resolve the oversupply problem

BY TAN AI LENG

The National Home Ownership Campaign 2019 (HOC) could be one good way to help tackle the overhang situation in the current residential property market but the Association of Valuers, Property Managers, Estate Agents and Property Consultants in the Private Sector Malaysia (PEPS) president Michael Kong opines that the initiative should extend to the secondary market to resolve the problem in a more effective way.

"Genuine homebuyers could take advantage of the HOC and benefit from the substantial savings from the discounts by developers and the stamp duty waiver while developers could take the opportunity to offload some of their existing unsold stock.

"However, I feel that the initiative should be extended to the secondary market too as the current oversupply situation is not just due to unsold developer units but also the vacant and unoccupied units which are held privately by owners," he tells EdgeProp.my.

The HOC is an initiative by the Housing and Local Government Ministry (KPKT) to tackle the high number of unsold homes in the country. The six-month campaign is running until June, offering stamp duty waivers and other incentives to homebuyers.

In sharing his thoughts on areas in which KPKT Minister Zuraida Kamaruddin could improve upon in the near future and her performance thus far in her first year as minister, Kong says one year is too short to assess the performance of the minister as



Kong: Genuine homebuyers could take advantage of the HOC and benefit from substantial savings.

the new government needs time to familiarise itself and lay the groundwork for various short- to medium-term plans and initiatives.

"Whilst there hasn't been any major policy announcements of note, the minister has largely focussed on home ownership, affordability and empowerment of the B40 group in particular," he notes.

Kong adds that the implementation of incentives and rebates for investors

to absorb overhang stock will, in turn, increase availability of rental stock. These rebates and incentives would act as a buffer against any diminution in rents arising from increased supply to the market.

While encouraging homeownership, Kong opines that housing the population does not necessarily mean everyone owns a house, instead, renting should be encouraged so that financial pressure or burden can be alleviated.

To fully understand the occupancy rate of certain projects, he says the Joint Management Body, Management Corporations or local councils should be compelled to provide occupancy or vacancy information to ascertain the true property supply and demand situation in the country.

Meanwhile, he also proposes that KPKT monitor the quality of housing developers by introducing a barrier to entry for first-time housing developers. For instance, their maiden project should be based on the "build-then-sell" concept to ensure their ability to deliver the project.



PICTURES BY LOW YEN YEING | EdgeProp.my



The amazing hanging Origami doves is formed by 41,600 doves hand-folded by the PPB Group property division's staff and their family members.



Trees + art + entrepreneurs = The Linc

BY SHAWN NG

If you are looking for a place to take amazing Instagram shots, enjoy some nice food and appreciate some art by local talents - look no further than this humble retail spot called The Linc.

Opened last November, the mall is situated on a 3.67-acre site at the intersection of Jalan Ampang and Jalan Tun Razak in Kuala Lumpur city. But make no mistake, this two-storey mall is no ordinary shopping centre.

With its vivid murals, colourful art installations and a wide array of home grown brands setting up shop here, The Linc strives to become a community-centric destination for both locals and tourists especially foodies, Instagram-ers, art and culture lovers and those looking to support local entrepreneurs, says PPB Group Bhd property division chief operating officer Chew Hwei Yeow.

"We have a fantastic location in the city centre. However, instead of going high-end, we decided to be more community-centric and focus on a niche market so we chose to go with arts and murals, to create our own charm," he told EdgeProp.my.

PPB Group is the property manager of The Linc which is owned by The Kuok Group. Both are controlled by tycoon Robert Kuok.

An oasis in the city

Lush greenery with plenty of trees surrounds The Linc, but what stands out are six mature trees that are decades old.

Of the six, three are situated within the mall, giving the place an air of tranquility and offering city folks peace amidst the hustle and bustle outside.

"One of the key instructions from the senior management of the Kuok Group was that the trees must not be touched," Chew recalls.

"So, we hired an arborist to advise us on how the trees can be maintained, and incorporated them into the overall design. We constructed the mall around them," he says.

Retaining the trees turned out to be an excellent move. Visitors to the mall can frequently be seen taking selfies with the trees and the creatures that hang out among the trees such as squirrels and birds.

The trees also serve as inspiration to budding artists. A group of painters visit the mall every Saturday. They have



Chew: We chose to go with arts and murals to create our own charm.



Decades-old trees are rooted within the mall, offering a sense of tranquility to the place.

their own space provided by the mall management for them to paint and be inspired by the trees.

“Everyone has been so respectful of the trees and the response has been so encouraging,” Chew says.

Art installations and murals

The most stunning art installation in the mall is probably the hanging origami doves. Some 41,600 doves in 40 colour collections, each hand-folded by the PPB Group property division staff and their family members over a period of about six months, were hung up in February this year.

There is also an attractive rainbow-hued staircase where visitors can chill and take selfies.

Also not to be missed are the murals created by local and international artists. A giant owl on the wall seems at home among the trees, while the fire-hose reels are turned into octopus instead. There is also the romantic rafflesia and tropical flora mural which has poetry written on it.

The management has provided plenty of seats and tables within the public spaces to encourage visitors to linger and enjoy the art around them, explains Chew.

“Some of the chairs are recycled from our New World Park in Penang. Instead of throwing them away, we sent them down here and repainted them,” he adds.

The art is in line with the mall’s objective to provide a platform for local talents to showcase their works and in turn, expose them to a wider audience.

Chew notes that the artist who created the owl mural, Amarul Abdullah, was later appointed by one of the mall tenants to undertake the interior design of its outlet.

“We actually have such talented people in Malaysia but no platform for them to showcase their artwork and make a living from it. We hired them to do the interior design for us and then some of the tenants decided to continue the style in their outlets and appointed them to do the job as well,” he says.

Homegrown brands

Of the 130,000 sq ft of net lettable area in The Linc, about 87% has been leased out, of which almost all tenants are homegrown brands such as Ben’s Independent Grocer, BritishIndia, Spice Garden, Wrappe and De.Wan 1958.

Food and Beverage (F&B) will be a major seg-

ment of the tenant mix and it is expected to hit 40% while the rest will constitute services such as a gym, hair salon, dental clinic, money changer and laundry service.

“These are very strong homegrown brands that can cater to mid- to high-end market segments. And we are very muhibbah because we have got De.Wan 1958 that serves authentic Malay cuisine; Shu Xiang Lou Hotpot and Sichuan Cuisine that caters to Chinese crowds; and Spice Garden, an award-winning Indian restaurant – all of them are founded by Malaysians,” he notes.

Apart from F&B, there are many more homegrown brands such as rattan furniture producer HOMES by Rahim x Nik, Batik-inspired apparel Kaptan Batik and handmade ceramic-ware outlet Bendang Artisan.

One could chill out with a cup of coffee at Bean Brothers or calm their mind with the creative indoor flowers and plants at Pasu Crafted.

Those looking for a more exciting and immersive experience – the real escape room game Hauntu by Breakout is able to offer you an unforgettable theatrical experience.

Constantly evolving

Although The Linc is not fully occupied yet, the management is not in a hurry to fill up the remaining spaces as the team wants to select the right tenants that will suit the mall best.

Nevertheless, the management is committed to keeping the mall fresh with constant art changes in collaborations with artists.

“We might take down the doves after six or nine months for something else. We want to continuously evolve so that there will always be something new for visitors when they come,” he says.

Currently, PPB Group is working on its next mall in the Klang Valley – the retail mall at Megah Rise mixed development in Taman Megah, Petaling Jaya.

The mall has yet to be named, but similar to The Linc and Cheras LeisureMall, it will be community-centric to cater to the neighbourhood and the surrounding areas.

Slated to open in early 2022, PPB Group is hoping the new mall will become another Instagram hotspot, he says.

“We are doing something quite interesting which we have not seen before. There will be something very creative on the building facade,” he hints.



Almost all of the tenants in the mall are homegrown brands, such as rattan furniture producer HOMES by Rahim x Nik .



The Linc is a humble but unique retail spot located at the intersection of Jalan Ampang and Jalan Tun Razak in Kuala Lumpur city.

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