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Are you being poisoned in your own home?

JOEY YAP'S FENG SHUI & ASTROLOGY LIVE SEMINAR 2019



WIN two tickets!
to Joey Yap's Feng Shui & Astrology 2019 Seminar!
Find out how on Page 2

'University town' SUBANG JAYA EST. 1976

Subang Jaya in Selangor continues to be a property hot spot today, thanks in part to the concentration of schools and higher learning institutions in the area.

See Pages 8 and 9.



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**Three killed in
Kuching mall blast**An explosion rocked CityONE
Megamall in Kuching, Sarawak, at
around 3.30pm on Dec 4, killing
three and injuring 44 people.Kuching District Police Chief,
ACP Ng Ah Lek said the dead were
identified as O Kui Lim, 49, Tchee
Kiom Joong, 24 and Chin Hsien
Loong, 29.Two of them were workers of
Nene Chicken, a restaurant in the
mall that was undergoing renova-
tions while another was an employ-
ee of the contractor undertaking the
renovation works.They were confirmed dead at
the scene as the building structure
had collapsed on them during the
explosion.The explosion was believed to
have been caused by a leaking gas
pipeline at the restaurant.**Forest reserve to
be degazetted for
housing project?**A public hearing to obtain feedback
on a proposal to degazette a part of
the Bukit Lagong Forest Reserve in
Gombak for a housing development
project is under-way. The 30-day
hearing will allow stakeholders in
the Gombak district to voice their
objections to the proposed degazet-
tement of 28.3ha near the fringe of
the forest reserve.The Bukit Lagong Forest Reserve
is located close to the Forest
Research Institute of Malaysia**WeWork to open first office in Malaysia next year**New York-based co-work-
ing space WeWork has an-
nounced the opening of its
first co-working space in
Kuala Lumpur in 1Q19.To accommodate 1,900
members over five floors,
its biggest office to date in
Southeast Asia will be locat-
ed at Equatorial Plaza and
will offer three main servic-
es – hot desking, dedicat-
ed desks and private office
suites.Fees charged will include
24/7 access to the office, utilities,
free flow of beverages, meeting
rooms and printing service cred-
its, high-speed WiFi access and
entry to all 335 WeWork locations
globally.WeWork Southeast Asia
director Turochas 'T' Fuad said
the American company is excitedonly are we trying to help
companies around the
world enter Malaysia,
we are also looking at
how we can work closely
with the government
and other partners
around Malaysia to
help expand globally.
The WeWork network of
335 physical locations
and 320,000 members
around the world is what
differentiates WeWork
from similar co-working
spaces out there," said Fuad.WeWork's local partner for
Malaysia is Daman Land, whose
role is to help WeWork engage with
landlords as well as source for
spaces to operate in, in Malaysia.WeWork is currently present
in 83 cities and 24 countries
around the world.to enter the Malaysian market,
which is supported by the
sustained and strong outlook for
Malaysia's economy."WeWork has been around
for eight years and what we are
doing — especially in the global
network — is one thing that sets
us apart from everyone else. Not**Abandoned
project revived**The Selangor government's
RM18 million allocation for the
completion of abandoned projects
under the Abandoned Projects
Revival Fund (Tepat) has yielded
results.Selangor Housing and Urban
Living Committee chairman Haniza
Talha said RM6mil of the amount
which had been allocated in 2016was used this year to complete a
project in Taman Desa Mawar in
Kuala Selangor."We are looking to fund two
other projects in Kampung
Melayu Rasah, Ampang Pecah
and Kampung Koskan Sungai
Cho," Haniza was quoted as saying
in an English daily.Haniza was answering a ques-
tion from Lee Kee Hiong (PH-Kuala
Kubu Baru) regarding the amount
allocated to the fund.**LAUNCHES + EVENTS**How do I get past issues of this weekly pullout?
Go to www.EdgeProp.my to download for freeIf you have any real estate-related events, email us at editor@edgeprop.my.
Events listed here will also appear on www.EdgeProp.my.**Enchanted
Christmas at Bandar
Sri Sendayan****Date:** Dec 8 & 9 (Sat & Sun)**Time:** 10am to 9pm**Venue:** d'Tempat Country
Club, PT 12653, Jalan
Pusat Dagangan Sendayan
1, Bandar Sri Sendayan,
Negeri Sembilan**Contact:** (06) 792 2688Immerse yourself in the stun-
ning Christmas decor and festive
activities at the event organised
by Matrix Concepts Holdings
Bhd. There will be a Winter
Wonderland Inflatable Globe,
9D Virtual Reality stations and
you'll even get the chance to
feed deers.**Petting zoo at
SERINI Melawati****Date:** Dec 8 & 9 (Sat & Sun)**Time:** 10am to 5pm**Venue:** Sime Darby Property
at SERINI Melawati, Level
8, Tower 2, Off Jalan
Lingkar Tengah 2, Desa
Melawati, Kuala Lumpur
Contact: (03) 4162 1788Treat your kids to a fun day out
at Sime Darby Property's SERINI
Melawati. Enjoy the petting zoo
as you teach the kids a thing or
two about our delightful animal
friends. Light refreshments will
be provided, along with other fun
activities for the little ones.**Christmas by the lake****Date:** Dec 8 & 9 (Sat & Sun)**Time:** 11am to 6pm**Venue:** Sunway Serene Sales
Gallery, Lot 72241, Jalan
SS8/2, SS7, Petaling Jaya
Contact: (017) 964 0788Join Sunway Property for an
early Christmas celebration by
the lake at Sunway Serene and
enjoy activities such as an out-
door movie screening, a Christ-
mas socks workshop and a DIY
Christmas tree workshop.**Pottery workshop
at Setia EcoHill****Date:** Dec 8 & 9 (Sat & Sun)**Time:** Session A: 11am;
Session B: 2pm**Venue:** Setia EcoHill Welcome
Centre, No. 1, Persiaran
Ecohill Barat, Setia Ecohill,
Semenyih, Selangor
Contact: (03) 8724 2255Join S P Setia Bhd at Setia
EcoHill for a hands-on creative
pottery workshop that is fun forboth kids and parents. Put your
hands to work, and craft a beau-
tiful piece of pottery to proudly
display at home! Limited seats,
so RSVP now.**UK Tax Talk &
Budget Updates****Date:** Dec 8 (Sat)**Time:** 10am to 6pm

(Talk at 2pm)

Venue: Iris & Hibiscus
Room, One World Hotel,
First Avenue, Bandar
Utama, Petaling Jaya
Contact: (016) 228
8691, (016) 228 9150Organised by CSI Prop, the
talk at 2pm features Adams
and Moore UK's Tan Siew Nee
who will enlighten guests on
tax changes in the UK and how
they affect investors. Learn more
about the new Foreigner's Stamp
Duty Surcharge, increases in
Personal Income and Capital
Gains tax allowances as well as
other deductions and tax ben-
efits that apply to property and
other forms of investments.JOEY YAP'S
FENG SHUI & ASTROLOGY
LIVE SEMINAR 2019**Joey Yap's Feng Shui
& Astrology Live
Seminar 2019****WIN
two
tickets!****Date:** Jan 5 (English) & 6 (Cantonese)**Time:** 10am to 5pm**Venue:** Malaysia International Trade
and Exhibition Centre (MITEC), No 8,
Jalan Dutamas 2, Kuala Lumpur
Contact: (03) 2284 8080The year 2019 is upon us and once
again the annual Joey Yap Feng Shui
& Astrology Live Seminaris back! Join a contest
exclusively forEdgeProp.my readers
and win two ticketsto the seminar. Go to
www.EdgeProp.my,to submit your most
interesting FengShui questions
and be in therunning to
win. Contest
ends Dec 19.



South Creek - 17 acres Town Park

SP Setia's new project in the Kajang-Semenyih Corridor, Setia EcoHill 2 is the home of the first of the IDEAL Home series—Baccas. Co-created by Malaysians, Baccas is a spacious landed double-storey link house with 4 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms. Its modern design is the result of a research collaboration with The Edge Property and other key partners like Lafarge, Nippon Paint and Panasonic. The research surveyed over 14,000 Malaysians who are actively searching for a house to understand the ideal house design that home buyers are looking for.

Officiated by the Minister of Housing and Local Government, Baccas is the first of the IDEAL Home series—the public can now see what the ideal home for a Malaysian looks like. According to the survey, most Malaysians prefer more than 1,000 sq ft. built up for family homes—Baccas features 1,651 sq ft. to meet this requirement. Good ventilation is another popular request, which informed Baccas' open floor layout offering visibility from the front door all the way to the living room, dining room and wet kitchen area. Another major feature Malaysians enjoy is having a garden in the home—Baccas offers a 10 feet backyard garden for landscaping or home extension.

The research by The Edge Property shows that 82% of Malaysians desires landed property like Baccas, and 35% are looking for terraced homes or townhouses. Accessibility, good amenities, township environment and security are all high up in what Malaysians consider important for their homes. As such, Setia EcoHill 2 is the ideal location in which to launch the project.

On the heels of the huge successes of the Setia Alam and Setia EcoHill townships, S P Setia's is developing Setia EcoHill 2's 1,010 acres of freehold land into a self-contained township ecosystem that offers a secure, connected and healthy environment.

For worry free and secure living, especially for kids and senior citizens, each residential village comprises of 300 to 500 units with a single access point for easy security monitoring and enables neighbourhood watch to function effectively. Fencing was implemented along the perimeters of each precinct and houses are equipped with home alarm systems. Polis Bantuan empowered by the Polis Diraja Malaysia help keep the area free from crime.



Source: Image by EdgeProp.my

Baccas Show Unit - Open Concept Layout



Club 360 - Infinity Swimming Pool

Many Malaysians look to local community and conveniences when choosing a new home to move into. Baccas has no shortage of that. EcoHill Walk is a premium integrated commercial development aiming to be the next commercial landmark in Semenyih. It features 241 units of retail shop offices, 2 blocks of serviced residences and a neighborhood mall scheduled for completion in the year 2020 and is targeted to serve the 600,000 population of Semenyih. The mall will host a hypermarket, cinema, fitness centre, food and beverage, fashion and lifestyle outlets with various anchor tenants. EcoHill Taipan nearby already hosts a 7 Eleven, Mr. DIY, 99 Speedmart, Poliklinik Damai, EcoSmile dental clinic and a fitness centre. Tesco is also just a stone's throw away.

Many reputable education institutions are available nearby such as Tenby International School (with a capacity of 1,800 students), REAL Kids School, 2 Chinese primary schools and several other government schools. The township is also not left wanting for amenities with Setia EcoHill's Club 360° providing 360,000 sq. ft. of facilities, including swimming pools,

basketball courts, futsal courts, a gym, sauna and function halls for events.

Setia EcoHill 2 is also a highly connected township with a dedicated direct interchange to LEKAS, connecting it to SKVE, PLUS Grand Saga Highway and the most anticipated EKVE to be completed in September 2019. The township has easy access to Puchong, Cheras, Putrajaya, Cyberjaya, Greater KL and Seremban for the convenience of residents and visitors alike.

The village community concept will play an important role in creating a healthy and harmonious community among the residents in the township. Activities such as festive events, Green-Xercise, recycling initiatives and Kid's Workshops help connect residents and the people of the surrounding community.

On the environmental front, over 100 acres in the township was preserved for parks and waterscapes designed to be a healthy and holistic fusion between human spaces and natural ones. Working with the Malaysian Nature Society (MNS), Setia re-created microhabitats to sustain the natural flora and fauna of the area and

The Ideal Malaysian Home is Here!



EcoHill Walk

replanted over 10,000 trees over the whole township's development.

Of these, the impressive 17 acres South Creek is located at the heart of the township, featuring more than 80 native trees transplanted from the original site, with some of those trees being over 100 years old. The Adventure Park's 18 acres on the other hand, is dedicated to the young and young at heart. Adventurous activities such as jungle trekking, forest playgrounds, bird watching and climbing walls provide plenty of healthy activities for visitors.

As air quality is a top concern for home buyers, Setia is partnering with Panasonic to provide innovative air ventilation systems to all Baccas purchasers! The air ventilation system will help channel clean and filtered air into the house for healthy living, even with the doors and windows shut. Baccas purchasers will also enjoy special discounts on Panasonic electrical appliances when the houses are completed in 2021, including air-conditioners, fridges, water heaters, washing machines and more.

S P Setia is holding a year end sales promotion through their SEAL package, offering 0% interest deferred payment scheme with a 5 years installment plan for projects which are currently already completed. This is the golden opportunity for buyers to own a Setia home which is ready for families to move into. Tours are offered at the Setia EcoHill Welcome Centre @ Club 360 and welcomes inquiries at 03-8724 2255.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

Setia



UEM Sunrise ventures into hospitality with Hyatt House hotel

BY NATALIE KHOO

KUALA LUMPUR: UEM Sunrise Bhd opened the first Hyatt House in the Southeast Asian region at Mont'Kiara, Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Located at UEM Sunrise's mixed development Arcoris Mont'Kiara, the four-star extended stay hotel marks the developer's first foray into the hospitality sector. It is also currently the largest Hyatt House in the world.

Featuring the ambience of a luxury home, Hyatt House Kuala Lumpur, Mont'Kiara features over 298 contemporary, residential-inspired studios and suites with fully equipped kitchens, living rooms and bedrooms. The hotel also offers a three-meal restaurant, take-away options at the 24-hour H Market store, free Wi-Fi, a 24-hour fitness centre, an infinity rooftop sky pool and the TEN 37 Pool Bar.

The hotel is designed by world-renowned architectural firm Foster + Partners.

At the opening ceremony, UEM Sunrise managing director and CEO Anwar Syahrin Abdul Ajib said the company has developed Mont'Kiara for over 30 years and has seen the area evolve, thanks to the presence of food & beverage outlets, international schools and a mix of international and local residents in its community.

"But there was always something



From left: UEM Sunrise Bhd general manager retail & assets management Devamanokaran Poonagasu, Koffler, Anwar, UEM Sunrise chief financial officer Mohamed Rastam Shahrom, and Hyatt House Kuala Lumpur general manager Bennett Peter at the opening ceremony of Hyatt House Kuala Lumpur.

missing, and we believed we needed a hotel. Having Hyatt House in Mont'Kiara is like completing a piece of the puzzle in our development. We are thrilled to have a world-class hotel chain as one of the five components of Arcoris Mont'Kiara.

"The residential-inspired hotel which focuses on providing a home-like atmosphere, complements the concept that inspires us when developing our residential offerings — that is to build communities, where people can feel a sense of belonging and call it home," said Anwar.

Meanwhile, Hyatt Place/Hyatt House and Full-Service Franchise Operations, Asia Pacific Hyatt Ho-

tels & Resorts regional vice president Michael Koffler said Hyatt House is supported by house hosts.

"When you come and visit our house, you are hosted by our house host because it is like a home. Our mantra in Hyatt is that we care for people so that they can be at their best," added Koffler.

Hyatt House enables guests to live and work just as they might within their own homes. Rooms are fitted with amenities such as washing machines and a fully-equipped kitchen.

Koffler said this is an opportunity for those from abroad who are looking for a short-term stay while they find a more permanent home,

Designed by Foster + Partners, Hyatt House Kuala Lumpur is the biggest Hyatt House hotel in the world to date.

as most landlords would not accommodate shorter term rentals, such as for a month.

It also offers the A Very Important Resident (VIR) programme that provides complimentary grocery shopping service, and other personalised perks for guests who stay more than 30 plus consecutive nights.

PICTURES BY LOW YEN YEING | EdgeProp.my



"We can also take them for a tour of the rooms on offer, to choose the unit they want to stay in" Koffler added.

The next Hyatt House is currently in the works in Melaka. The Hyatt House brand was launched in 2012 and offers more than 85 locations around the world.

Temokin gears up for phase two of Mahligai in JB

BY NATALIE KHOO

SENTUL: Boutique property developer Temokin Development Sdn Bhd, a subsidiary of construction outfit Temokin Holdings Sdn Bhd will be launching the second phase of Mahligai homes in Johor Bahru next year (2019), CEO Tan Chien Chyi told EdgeProp.my.

This follows the success of Mahligai's first phase which has been over 95% sold since its launch in September, Tan told EdgeProp.my.

"The pull factor is no secret. It was just a matter of matching the demands of homebuyers in the area and building to their requirements, with quality," said Tan.

Located at Nusa Damai in Pasir Gudang, Mahligai marks Temokin Development's debut as a property developer. Located on 11.75 acres of freehold land, Tan says the project has a gross development value of RM100 million and is targeted at owner occupiers and families.

The project comprises three phases, with phase one consisting of 53 double-storey terraced homes with a built up area of 1,679 sq ft for intermediate units and 1,752



An artist's impression of Mahligai.

sq ft for corner units.

Phase 2 of Mahligai will feature 87 double-storey terraced homes whilst phase 3 will feature 23 exclusive, three-storey terraced homes. Phase 2 of Mahligai has been opened for registration and has received a good response.

All homes feature spacious open plan layouts and column-free car porches whilst every bedroom comes with an attached bathroom.

"The units will be priced 5%-10% higher compared to the selling price of our previous launch.

We are also in the midst of looking into other aspects of the product that we can improve for phase two," Tan says. The price of homes in the first launch started from RM564,000 before Bumiputera discount.

The first row of homes of Mahligai phase one has been constructed so that homebuyers can get a feel for what it is like to live there, he added.

"Johor's property market will continue to be challenging, but as we have shown at Mahligai's launch, demand is there so long

PICTURES BY TEMOKIN HOLDINGS



Tan: Johor's property market will continue to be challenging, but demand is there so long as the properties are appropriately priced and are in good locations.

as the properties are appropriately priced and are in good locations, especially in mature neighbourhoods.

"Starting on the construction of the homes before the launch helped build the confidence of our potential buyers. On the broader market, we foresee that residential high rises will run into sales challenges, but landed residential properties will continue to see sta-

ble growth. On the whole, we are quite bullish on Malaysia's property market," said Tan.

The developer currently has 50 acres of landbank divided among Johor, Negri Sembilan and the Klang Valley.

"In the foreseeable future, our efforts will be focused on Mahligai at Nusa Damai, Johor. As a boutique developer and with Mahligai being our maiden development, we want to give Mahligai and its buyers all our attention. Moving forward, we see this same philosophy being extended to each project that we launch.

"Next year will be quite exciting for us. Our target is to double our gross development value as well as organically increase the net sales of our Johor properties. As mentioned, Mahligai is our first project so we want to ensure we build a positive, solid foundation for the Temokin Development brand before moving on to new projects," Tan said.

Temokin Holdings is a construction company and its portfolio ranges from the construction of the Seremban Middle Ring Road to the construction of the new Istana Negara.



FundMyHOME

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Why rent when there's FundMyHome?

Say you and your spouse are in your late 20's, with two beautiful children. You earn just over RM5,000 a month – barely enough to cover your car loan, groceries, utilities and other expenses. You've delayed buying a house and are renting a 3-bedroom, 900 sqft apartment for RM1,200 a month.

How can FundMyHome help you buy a home?

First up, it offers a variety of homes to suit your family's needs. Let's say you choose a newly-built apartment costing RM300,000.

Under FundMyHome, you need to pay just 20% of the purchase price to secure your home. And you can do this by taking a 5-year personal loan of RM60,000 at 7% p.a., which works out to a repayment of just RM1,200 a month.

FundMyHome will help raise the balance of 80% from institutions. And once the buying process, including vacant possession is completed, you and your family can move in.

Yes, you will still have monthly payments to service your personal loan. But the big difference is, while previously you paid rent, your monthly payments now go to building up your equity. If you service your loan promptly each month, it will also improve your credit rating. Your family enjoys the security of living in your own home, without worrying about rental increases or the landlord asking you to vacate.

At the end of five years, you will have equity worth RM60,000 in a home under your name (Table 1). If you had continued to rent, you would have nothing to show for the 5 years' worth of rental paid.

Table 1:
Renting versus Buying under FundMyHome

	Renting	FundMyHome
Upfront cash required	0	0
Monthly rent (Year 1-5)	1,200	-
Monthly Loan repayment (Year 1-5)	-	1,200 ¹
Ownership at end of Year 5	0	60,000 ²

¹ Arises from servicing the 7%, 5-yr RM60,000 personal loan (reducing balance) taken out to fund 20% of the purchase price.
² Value of the homeowner's 20% equity assuming the property price remains unchanged.

Buying through FundMyHome rather than renting during the first five years puts you in a better financial position for a mortgage thereafter.

Year 6 and beyond

Continuing your journey as a homebuyer under FundMyHome, by Year 6, you would have accumulated RM60,000 or 20% equity in the home (Table 2).

Should you choose to apply for a 80% mortgage to buy the home, you need no further funds to meet the downpayment, assuming the home price is unchanged at RM300,000. And if it rises, to say RM350,000, you only need to top up RM10,000.

Table 2:
A Better Position for a Mortgage in Year 6

	Renting	FundMyHome
Equity in home at start of Year 6	0	60,000
Funds needed for 20% downpayment:		
If the home price stays at RM300,000	60,000	0
If the home price rises to RM350,000	70,000	+10,000
If the home price falls to RM270,000	54,000	+24,000 ¹

¹ Due to the fall in home price, your remaining equity of RM30,000 is your original 20% equity of RM60,000 less the loss of RM30,000. The RM24,000 refers to the top up amount required to meet the new 20% equity of RM54,000 based on home price of RM270,000.

Rental: The more expensive alternative

On the other hand, if you had stayed in a rented house through the first five years, you would have no equity in the home and would need to raise a further RM60,000 towards the downpayment of 20% to purchase the same home costing RM300,000 (Table 2). If the home price rises to RM350,000, you would need to raise a higher sum of RM70,000.

The reality is, you will NEVER be worse off with FundMyHome, compared to renting. If the house price falls by 10%, you would still have positive equity value of 10% of the original house price. Even if the house price falls by 20%, you are not worse off than renting. The positive equity value created is what will help you to eventually own the home completely.

“Pay RM1,200 per month in rental for 5 years? Or pay RM1,200 per month towards owning my own home? The choice is obvious!”



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Malaysian AYDA 2018 winners to compete regionally for Harvard programme

BY SHAWN NG

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysian winners of the Asia Young Designer Award 2018 (AYDA 2018) will be representing the country to compete with winners from 14 geographical locations across Asia for the title of Asia Young Designer of the Year 2018/19.

The two winners were announced in a ceremony on Dec 5. Loo Yi from Universiti Malaya (UM) and Zachary Khaw Lit Siang from Taylor's University won Gold Awards for the Architecture and Interior Design categories respectively, having beaten 1,260 other entries to the annual interior design and architecture competition this year. AYDA 2018 was spearheaded by Nippon Paint and supported by IJM Land Bhd.

Loo and Khaw will take their winning projects to Singapore in March 2019 to compete against winners from Bangladesh, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam and will strive to win a six-week all-expenses-paid design programme at the Harvard Graduate School of Design.

In her opening speech at the AYDA 2018 awards ceremony, Nippon Paint Malaysia group general manager Gladys Goh said the goal of this year's theme "Forward: Challenging Design Boundaries" was to dare young designers to look beyond the conventional limitations of design, while considering how the act of designing can bring a positive impact to environmental issues, infuse new values into social and cultural contexts, enhance community living and lifestyle, and encourage progressive growth and development in a city.

"We are extremely proud of the Malaysian winners. They have shown us what it means to question creative perimeters and think in a forward-looking, innovative way that breaks the norm of design as we know it," she said.

Meanwhile, IJM Land managing



PICTURES BY AYDA

director Edward Chong said the company is immensely proud of AYDA and the way in which it has evolved internationally, as winners prove year after year that they are designers shaping the future of the industry.

"Our partnership with Nippon Paint is in its fifth year, and aims to connect students to the heart of the industry, to build places and spaces for vibrant living and thriving sanctuaries [that are] respectful of nature, that resonate with families, businesses and communities. We strongly believe in shaping and empowering young talents who will essentially transform the architectural and interior design panorama of our future," he continued.

The winning designs

According to Sarly Adre Sarkum, chief judge of the Architecture category, Loo's project "Mangrove Charcoal Living Museum" won top honours in the Architecture category due to its sustainable design that echoes this year's theme.

"[The design of the project] fits the theme in a very unique way and it [has included] both the environment and cultural aspects

Top: Goh and Chong (7th and 8th from left, back row) celebrate with AYDA 2018 judges and winners. Loo and Khaw are seated (4th and 5th from left).

Right: Gold winner in the architecture category, 'Mangrove Charcoal Living Museum' by Loo.



The Interior Design category gold winner, 'The Weave' by Khaw.

[of the project site]," Sarly said at a press conference after the awards ceremony.

The student from UM has designed a museum on a 3.7-acre site within a mangrove forest in Kuala Sepetang, a small coastal fishing village in Perak. The aim is to preserve the existing traditional charcoal factories and the natural mangrove forest while transforming

the area into a new tourist attraction and educational site.

It features a history and science zone, charcoal art gallery, souvenirs, a restaurant where one can dine within a lanai, kids' reading alcove, community spaces, boat and fishing rental service areas, community libraries, living labs and offices for the charcoal factories, Loo said during a presentation of the winning work.

"When I came up with this design, I wanted it to be not just a gallery to display collections of physical remains at Kuala Sepetang, but also a site to incorporate the locals' non-material cultural practices and natural forestry heritage," he added.

Meanwhile, Khaw, the winner of the Gold award in the Interior Design category said he took inspiration from the local fashion design industry and manifested his ideas into "The Weave", which is a fashion incubator for local designers and an upcycling design facility to turn old textiles into new outfits.

"This project has actually been a personal one for me, as I am interested in all branches of design and understand the struggles of a

budding fashion designer. In creating "The Weave", I wanted to give young fashion design students a leg up in the industry and help them become successful, thanks to the facilities incorporated into the design," he said.

Envisioned as a 3-storey design hub, the site identified for the project was the City Harvest Church KL, located in the Subang Jaya Industrial Estate, Selangor. The area is conducive for industrial energy, yet close enough to residential areas and thus accessible to consumers, explained Khaw.

Chief judge of the Interior Design category Lai Siew Hong, who is the chief executive designer of Blu Water Studio, said the judges were amazed by Khaw's work, with its underlying purpose of creating an impact on society and future generations.

"What he has done is not just about aesthetics. It has its purpose and he designed from his heart, with the focus being its impact on the next generation. We felt the strong purpose helped him focus his design, using what he feels to create a space that will impact others," he said.

When Forest City won the United Nation's (UN) Global Model of City-Industry Integration Award at the 2018 Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements Awards (SCAHS) on Oct 30, 2018, it was a testament to the developer's ongoing efforts "to create a better society with our existence". As the developer of Forest City in Iskandar Malaysia, Johor, this principle is demonstrated not just through Country Garden Pacificview Sdn Bhd's (CGPV) business operations, but even more in its three-pronged corporate social responsibility initiatives, which are youth education and empowerment, societal development and environmental awareness.

Invited to speak as the only Malaysian representative and panellist in the 2018 Annual Session of the Global Forum on Human Settlements (GFHS 2018) held at the UN Conference Centre in Bangkok during the event, Country Garden Malaysia and Forest City director of strategy Ng Zhu Hann stressed the importance of social inclusion. "For a project to be successful, you need to engage stakeholders, not only the government and other related businesses, but more importantly the local villages and community around you. You must take care of their needs, their education and their welfare."

In 2019, the company plans to set up the Yayasan Forest City to further pursue its charity works. In early October, Forest City also committed to the National Housing Policy by assisting the government in building affordable houses at cost price. Additionally, the company has signed up as one of the developers to revitalise PPR projects under Dasar Komuniti Negara by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND SOCIETAL DEVELOPMENT

Education has always been close to the heart of Country Garden Holdings' founder, Yeung Kwok Keung. Living in Guangdong, China then, Yeung almost got his schooling prematurely axed because his father couldn't afford the school fees. Thankfully, his teacher went out of her way to persuade his father and secured the young Yeung a scholarship to complete his studies.

Impacted by this benevolence, Country Garden Holdings, through its Poverty Reduction Foundation in Rural Areas, has set up the Guo Hua Memorial School in Foshan, China to provide opportunities for the poorest of the poor to get a proper education. Since 2002, half of Yeung's wealth has been poured into supporting this school and other philanthropic ventures. With the capacity to house 500 students, the Foundation pro-actively seeks out underprivileged children with excellent academic records across the country, offering them exemption from all charges including tuition fees, text books, meals and accommodation.

In Johor, the company has adopted seven government schools – providing them with the financial support to fund extra language classes and textbooks for the needy, to repair and rebuild the rundown teaching facilities, to decorate the compound, and to fix access roads near the schools.

Dubbed the Forest City Adopted School Revitalisation project, the initiative commenced in September by rejuvenating SK Tanjong Adang in Gelang Patah. With an allocation of RM550,000, the 100-year-old village school was given a facelift that included repairing the staircases; fixing plumbing and wiring; repainting the school facade and mural; and refurbishing the common areas, security guardhouse and



SK Tanjong Adang students and teachers posing with their newly refurbished school.

'Our journey towards social inclusion'



Hann (centre) spoke of social inclusion at the GFHS 2018 which was held at the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok.

sports facilities. Drawing on its own in-house expertise, the works received hands-on support from Forest City's teams in project, landscape, design and construction.

According to school principal Noriah Md Jidin, the revitalisation has filled the school children with a renewed sense of pride in their school and the motivation to attend school.

"A conducive learning environment is important so that the children can study well, and the teachers can teach effectively, while the parents can have peace of mind knowing that the children are in a safe environment," says Hann.

"Education and poverty alleviation have always been the hallmarks of Forest City and Country Garden Holdings. Apart from taking care of the villages and community near our development, we are planning to expand this initiative to other areas in

Johor as we believe education will change one's destiny.

"Forest City will continue to align with the government's call for more public-private partnership in overall economic activities and social development, especially the upgrading of education infrastructure as per Budget 2019," Hann states.

Besides these major projects, Forest City has other regular activities to promote learning such as English workshops for SPM students in Johor. It also established a scholarship programme amongst which the company offered eight full scholarships to Universiti Teknologi Malaysia in Johor and 10 vocational scholarships to Southern College, Johor.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

In cooperation with Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Forest City has given

a RM5 million research grant to its renowned Department of Aquaculture and the Department of Biology to transplant and rehabilitate the sea grass around the Forest City project. As part of the five-year agreement, the UPM team has been constantly monitoring the growth of seagrass at Forest City and other Environmentally Sensitive Areas since March 2015. Since then, the Merambong seagrass around the development has fully recovered its original size of 26.5ha with 12 different species having been transplanted to the shelter area.

UPM Department of Biology head Prof. Dr. Japar Sidik said, "The team from Forest City has been working on the transplant of seedlings on a monthly basis, and the seedlings we have transplanted in 2016 are now growing well."

"Having Forest City as our industrial partner has greatly benefitted the faculty, especially in providing hands-on experience to the students," UPM vice chancellor Prof. Datin Paduka Dr. Aini Ideris added.

The company also provides financial support to Kelab Alami, a community-based initiative started by environmentalist Dr Serina Rahman, whose PhD work is on marine education and community empowerment. The NGO is also given exposure opportunities in Forest City to showcase its work on green nature preservation.

LONG TERM PARTNERS

"Forest City believes in the potential of Malaysia. The future of the country lies in empowering the people and community, where the B40 and M40 are taken care of, especially in the area of education and self-development. As the company intends to stay for the long term, we will continue to contribute to the rakyat to the best of our ability for the good of the nation. A new Malaysia, a new hope, and no one should be left behind. We would like to be a part of that journey," Hann concludes.



SMK Tanjong Adang Form 5 students who attended the SKOR A SPM workshop organised by Forest City.





BY TAN AI LENG

Universities and schools, good food, and heavy traffic are probably amongst the top three things that come to mind when Subang Jaya is mentioned.

For property hunters and homebuyers, this vibrant suburban town in the state of Selangor — first developed over four decades ago — would be at the top of their list of desirable locations. One of the main factors supporting this demand is the existence of the many educational institutions in the area.

Henry Butcher Malaysia chief operating officer Tang Chee Meng tells EdgeProp.my that Subang Jaya always appears on the radar of those looking for a home or a property to invest in, primarily due to its self-sustaining components, which are constantly refreshed with new elements such as new purpose-built offices, hipster hangouts and shopping malls that regularly have something new for visitors.

Hartamas Real Estate (M) Sdn Bhd property advisor Teh Boon Keat says Subang Jaya has earned the moniker ‘University Town’ due to the number of private universities that have set up campuses here.

The cluster of tertiary educational institutes that makes Subang Jaya well known as an education hub includes INTI International University & College Subang, Sunway University, The One Academy, Monash University Malaysia, Taylor’s University Lakeside Campus and Segi College.

Overall, there are at least 14 tertiary institutes in Subang Jaya offering various courses that attract not only locals but also foreign students.

“Subang Jaya is blessed with a large number of schools both local and international, as well as tertiary education institutes which have attracted many residents to the township.

“The large student and working populations have also provided support for commercial activities and created a healthy rental market in SS12 to 19, USJ and Bandar Sunway areas,” says Tang.

For example, Asia Café in SS15 was an iconic food haven in Subang Jaya. The 2.05-acre food court offered over 100 food stalls and was a favourite haunt for students, young working adults and foodies in general before it ceased operations at end-2017 to give way to the Grand Subang Jaya development by Mediaraya Sdn Bhd, the landowner and boutique developer.

Subang Jaya's foundation in EDUCATION

The site will be redeveloped as a small office/home office (SoHo) project which caters to young working adults and students. It will offer 483 SoHos, with a standard built-up area of 563 sq ft housed in two 21- and 14-storey towers, and 770 parking bays.

Tang describes Subang Jaya as a good model of a sustainable township with its ample amenities and facilities, and vibrant commercial component that continues to attract traffic to the area.

He says that this model may be replicated, as long as supporting amenities such as shopping malls, eateries, entertainment centres, housing accommodation and a good public transport system are available to cater to the younger demographics.

From rubber estate to thriving township

Located in the Southwest of Kuala Lumpur, Subang Jaya was originally a rubber estate until the then Sime UEP Properties Bhd, a subsidiary under Sime Darby Bhd, kicked off the housing development in 1976 on the tracts close to SS7 in Petaling Jaya and U1 Shah Alam (the area currently known as SS12 to SS19). Thanks to the strategic location, this area soon became a popular address for new homebuyers.

Subang Jaya municipality comprises areas administered by the Petaling District Council and Shah Alam City Council. Areas carrying the Subang Jaya address include USJ, Putra Heights, Batu Tiga and Bandar Sunway.

Based on Subang Jaya Municipal Council (MPSJ) data, the 70.41 sq km municipality is home to 642,100 people as of 2015.

MPSJ data also showed that the number of residents in Subang Jaya exceeded half a million in 2004 with annual population growth at an average of 2.1% or 12,233 people.

In addition to the well-connected road network formed by the Federal Highway, Persiaran Kewajipan and Persiaran Tujuan as well as the Shah Alam Expressway (KES-AS), North South Expressway Central Link (ELITE), Damansara-Puchong Highway (LDP) and New Pantai Expressway (NPE), Subang Jaya is also served by several light rail transit (LRT) stations including Subang Jaya, USJ 21, SS15, USJ 7 and Taipan stations, as well as one BRT station in USJ 7.

Teh says the mature infrastructure development and public transport system is certainly a growth factor for the area.

Compared to other popular locations in the Klang Valley such as Petaling Jaya, Bandar Utama and Taman Tun Dr Ismail (TTDI), secondary property prices in Subang Jaya are relatively lower. For instance, one could find a landed freehold double-storey terraced house measuring 20ft by 60ft for around RM650,000, he adds.

EdgeProp.my data shows that the transaction price of semidees in Subang Jaya averaged RM432 psf based on land size in 1H2018, while the average selling price of semidees in Petaling Jaya was around RM534 psf in the same period.

Meanwhile, the transaction price of condominiums in Subang Jaya averaged RM441 psf in 1H2018, lower than the average sell-

SAM FONG | THE EDGE



Tang: Subang Jaya will continue its growth momentum supported by healthy fundamentals.

HARTAMAS REAL ESTATE



Teh: Subang Jaya's proximity to Shah Alam and Port Klang has also attracted expatriates.

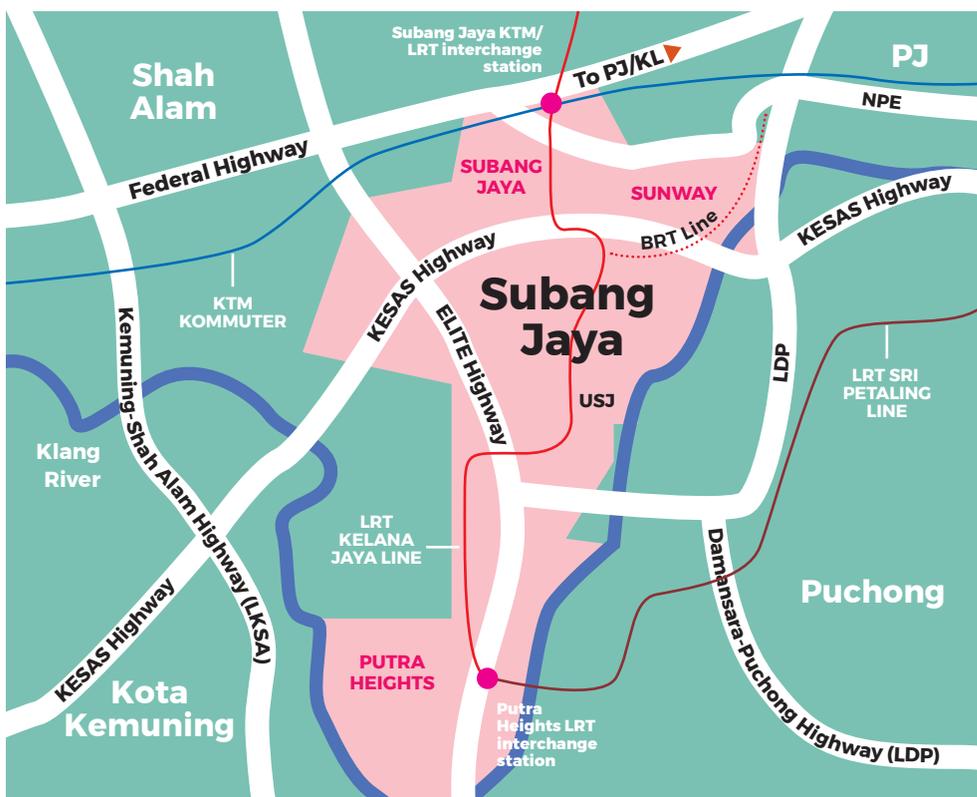
PROPEDIA CONSULTANCY



How: For investors, high prices now do not help capital appreciation in the short run.

Over the past six years, landed homes in Subang Jaya have enjoyed price appreciation of between 9.5% and 28%.





The cluster of educational institutes makes Subang Jaya a well-known education hub.

Price trend of different housing types for Subang Jaya and its vicinity

TYPE OF HOUSING	AVERAGE PRICE PSF (RM)								
Detached houses									
AREAS	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	6-YR ▲(%)**	1H2018	
Subang Jaya	482	586	471	562	480	540	12	537	
Puchong	162	187	143	280	288	271	67	400	
*Shah Alam	274	339	301	279	241	315	15	214	
Kota Kemuning	368	413	385	450	381	391	6	394	
Petaling Jaya	300	350	308	406	368	352	17	327	
Semidees									
AREAS	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	6-YR ▲(%)**	1H18	
Subang Jaya	441	454	415	448	529	483	9.5	432	
Puchong	335	372	388	413	350	306	-8.6	277	
*Shah Alam	353	360	394	372	345	390	-10.5	343	
Kota Kemuning	328	349	387	335	538	332	1.2	417	
Petaling Jaya	519	533	567	577	497	508	-2	534	
Terraced house									
AREAS	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	6-YR ▲(%)**	1H18	
Subang Jaya	361	411	445	453	453	462	28	453	
Puchong	312	352	387	384	404	414	32.7	413	
*Shah Alam	294	327	356	338	394	384	30.6	360	
Kota Kemuning	298	359	401	407	422	385	29	440	
Petaling Jaya	404	433	471	448	495	495	22.5	439	
Condominium									
AREAS	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	6-YR ▲(%)**	1H18	
Subang Jaya	330	348	373	403	426	448	35.7	441	
Puchong	250	295	306	311	358	369	47.6	349	
*Shah Alam	267	285	284	324	345	361	35	335	
Kota Kemuning	297	342	353	438	412	373	25.5	377	
Petaling Jaya	397	449	481	482	497	494	24.4	482	
Service apartment									
AREAS	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	6-YR ▲(%)**	1H18	
Subang Jaya	391	500	559	593	586	585	49.6	592	
Puchong	361	451	396	409	443	499	38	519	
*Shah Alam	232	379	449	515	561	555	139	541	
Kota Kemuning	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	
Petaling Jaya	734	797	730	699	682	702	-4	795	

* Including Saujana and Glenmarie ** Average capital appreciation from 2012 to 2017

SOURCE: EDGEPROPMY AND KNIGHT FRANK MALAYSIA

ing price of condominiums in Petaling Jaya which stood at RM482 psf.

Teh notes that besides the education element, Subang Jaya's proximity to Shah Alam and Port Klang has also attracted expatriates who prefer to live in high-rise residences close to their workplaces.

"Compared with Shah Alam and Port Klang, Subang Jaya has more rental offerings with easy reach to all kinds of amenities. This is definitely a pull factor for expats," he says.

Housing prices continue to climb

Subang Jaya property prices have enjoyed steady growth over the years. The non-landed residential segment has seen significant capital appreciation over the past six years from 2012 to 2017.

The average transaction price of serviced apartments have risen 49.6% to RM585 psf in 2017 from RM391 psf in 2012 while condominiums have seen their average selling price rise to RM448 psf in 2017 from 330 psf (2012), a capital appreciation of 35.7%.

Landed housing prices have also been on the uptrend, though not as steeply as non-landed homes.

Terraced homes in Subang Jaya have seen their average transaction psf (based on land size) in 2017 rise by 28% to RM462 psf from RM361 psf in 2012 while detached homes were up 12% to RM540 in 2017 from RM482 in 2012. Of all residential types, semidee homes had the lowest capital appreciation growth of 9.5% over the same period with average selling price of RM483 psf in 2017 compared with RM441 psf in 2012.

Despite its good accessibility and amenities, real estate agency Propedia Consultancy founder and principal Vicky How observes that current demand for residential properties in Subang Jaya will not be as good as five to six years ago due to the high entry cost.

"Housing prices (in Subang Jaya) have been escalating. For investors, high prices now do not help capital appreciation in the short run, unless one could find some properties selling under market price," she explains.

Nevertheless, for homebuyers looking for own-stay, the convenience of the road network, public transportation and access to amenities offered by Subang Jaya will continue to make the place attractive.

However, traffic congestion poses the biggest concern for homebuyers, unless they are working within the neighbourhood or if their parents stay nearby. Others may be deterred by the congested traffic.

Rental-wise, How says with the large stu-

dent and working population, demand for smaller housing units have remained strong.

"Most of them are looking for a one-bedroom unit or bedroom rental... a one-bedroom monthly rental may range from RM1,000 to RM1,500, while two-bedroom units can range from RM1,500 to RM2,500 depending on the furnishing and the quality of the development," she adds.

Despite the strong demand for rental units, she opines that rental yield may not be as good, since property prices in Subang Jaya are higher than other newer areas.

"Nevertheless, some owners have spotted opportunities in short-term rentals and turned their units into Airbnb units. This could generate higher rental income for them as demand for such rentals from business travellers are increasing," adds How.

Although prices are considered high at present, Tang from Henry Butcher opines that as a mature developed area that is well-connected to other cities or commercial hubs, Subang Jaya will continue its growth momentum supported by healthy fundamentals — location, amenities and a growing population.

"The good sales performance of recent new projects such as Lot 15 by Sime Darby Property Bhd and the Grand Subang Jaya shows that property buyers still like Subang Jaya," he says, adding that newer townships like Putra Heights offer cheaper options in Subang Jaya for homes with lifestyle elements and are close to the public transport system.

For investors, Tang advises them to look at terraced houses in older areas such as SS12, SS14, SS15, SS17 and SS19, for their strong rental market.

"For those who desire a quiet and classy neighbourhood, areas like USJ 5, USJ 11 and USJ 16 would be good options to consider," he adds.

Propedia's How observes that in USJ areas close to Shah Alam, housing prices are lower compared with areas close to Bandar Sunway, thus, the homes here could be a safe investment. However, she cautions that investments in this area should not be expected to fetch high capital appreciation in the medium term.

"Whether buying non-landed or landed properties, property buyers should compare the prices of different types of properties. Some of the landed properties in USJ are selling at a price equivalent to a condo. If that's the case, it's better to look into the landed property as there could be many undiscovered gems during this market slowdown as some owners may be desperate to let go," she advises.




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MM2H to attract higher quality applicants

BY SHAWN NG

Sixteen years since the Malaysia My Second Home (MM2H) programme was established in 2002, the programme has attracted a total of 38,932 participants from as many as 130 countries as at end-2017.

In 2017, the number of approvals recorded a spike with 6,195 applicants approved for the programme, a significant jump from 3,347 approvals the previous year.

The jump in approved participants last year can be attributed to the aggressive promotions of the Malaysia My Second Home Agents Association (MM2HAA) and the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia (MoTaC).

“We must continue the momentum and not lose our potential participants to other countries which have developed similar programmes,” says MoTaC deputy secretary general (tourism) Datuk Haslina Abdul Hamid.

While it is important to sustain its growth, Haslina also notes that it may be a good time to review some aspects of the programme, such as its financial requirements so it could attract better quality applicants to ensure that the Malaysian economy benefits.

Review needed

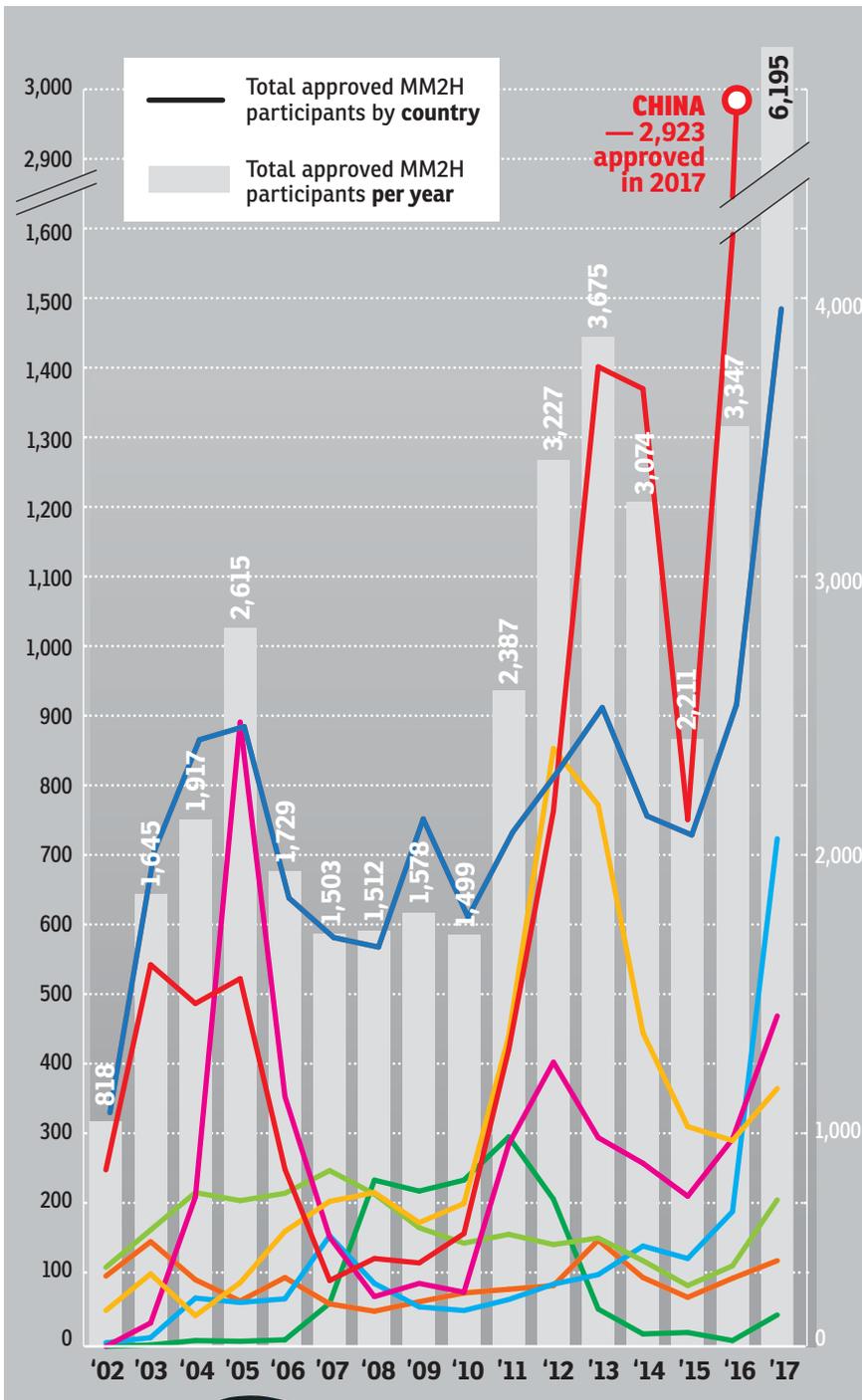
“After 16 years of its implementation, the ministry is of the opinion that there is a need to revise the financial requirements as well as other related fees such as visa and processing fees. We will also explore incentives that could be offered to ensure participation in the programme contributes more to our economy,” she tells EdgeProp.my.

Currently, the programme requires applicants aged below 50 years old to show proof of liquid assets worth a minimum of RM500,000 and offshore income of RM10,000 per month.

For applicants aged 50 and above, they will need to show proof of RM350,000 in liquid assets and offshore income of RM10,000 per month to be eligible under the programme.

In order to make MM2H more attractive to quality foreigners, MoTaC is also planning to improve the application process.

“We want to shorten the current processing time from [the current] 90 working days. The ministry will study and review and maybe replicate best practices from other countries offering similar schemes,” she says.



Top 7 participating countries

COUNTRY	TOTAL (2002 — 2017)	SHARE (%)
1 China	11,386	29.2
2 Japan	4,545	11.7
3 Bangladesh	3,944	10.1
4 UK	2,586	6.6
5 Korea	1,929	5
6 Singapore	1,403	3.6
7 Iran	1,376	3.5
Others	11,763	30.2
TOTAL	38,932	100

Comparison of the “second home” scheme in Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore

COUNTRY	DETAILS OF EACH PROGRAMME	FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS
Malaysia	MM2H, which allows applicants to live in Malaysia for up to 10 years on a multiple-entry and renewable Social Visit Pass	Applicants aged below 50 years: Minimum RM500,000 of liquid assets and offshore income of RM10,000 per month. Applicants aged 50 and above: Minimum RM350,000 of liquid assets and offshore income of RM10,000 per month.
Singapore	The Global Investor Program (GIP), which allows applicants to apply for permanent residence in Singapore with certain amount of contribution	Making a minimum contribution of SG\$2.5 million (RM7.61 million) under GIP.
Thailand	The Thailand Elite Residence Program, which offers applicants the right to live in the country for up to 20 years along with access to privileged services and VIP benefits	A one-off fee payment ranging from US\$15,000 (RM62,365) for a five-year residence visa to US\$60,000 (RM249,448) for a 20-year residence visa.



“We want to shorten the current processing time from [the current] 90 working days. The ministry will study and review and maybe replicate best practices from other countries offering similar schemes.” — Haslina

According to Haslina, another initiative to reduce the hassle of applying is the digitising of the visa and MM2H application process in collaboration with the Immigration Department of Malaysia.

“The MM2H Centre has also looked at a few avenues and some are being discussed with the Immigration Department. One is an appointment scheduling system, which allows MM2H participants and agents to select a date and time to visit the centre,” she offers.

Apart from that, the Immigration Department is planning to roll out the Electronic Visa Approval Letter (eVAL) and eVISA.

Haslina explains that instead of a physical visa approval letter, eVAL will be issued as a soft copy through the immigration system, making it easier for MM2H applicants to obtain an entry visa into Malaysia from the Malaysian Embassy in

their respective home countries.

As for the eVISA, the online application platform will enable foreign nationals to apply for an electronic visa to enter Malaysia at their convenience, she adds.

There are also plans to establish a taskforce to handle the rising number of applications and to shift some of the processes and tasks — such as renewal of the MM2H visa — to state immigration offices.

Meanwhile, the ministry has been engaging with existing MM2H participants to address their issues, while ensuring agents that serve the applicants give out the right information.

“Word-of-mouth promotion is the most powerful promotional tool for the MM2H. When MM2H participants are happy staying in Malaysia, they will inform their relatives and friends to join the programme,” she concludes.

Are you being poisoned in your own home?

BY TAN AI LENG

What if your home is making you ill? There are many toxic substances we may not be aware of in our homes that could cause health issues, and among the scariest ones is formaldehyde. This colourless substance is seemingly present almost everywhere.

Some things that could contain the naturally occurring organic compound are: composite wood furniture, fertiliser, paper, plywood, antiseptic, medicines, clothes, personal skin care products, cosmetics and even food!

Formaldehyde can be present in different forms. As a gas, it is flammable and has a pungent smell at room temperature. It is also known as formalin, methanal or methylene oxide.

In September this year, BBC News reported that concerns had been raised over formaldehyde levels following the death of a man who was staying in a rental apartment in Hangzhou. The man had died of leukaemia in July, three months after moving into the apartment.

His wife is suing Ziroom, the house rental app that advertised the property, alleging that it made him ill. He was told during a check-up in January that he was healthy. His wife said he became ill after he moved to Hangzhou from Beijing in April. Test results showed that the formaldehyde levels in the apartment were 0.132 milligrams per cubic metre - while the national standard is 0.1. Other similar cases have occurred in China.

Where is it present?

University Malaya research scientist Iman Asadi tells EdgeProp.my that many building materials contain formaldehyde: insulation materials, paper products, coatings, particleboard, glue and adhesives, permanent-press fabrics and others.

If formaldehyde is present in the air in high levels, it could harm one's skin, digestive, immune and respiratory systems.

Levels of formaldehyde in the air is measured in parts per million (ppm).

"According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, a safe environment contains less than 0.1 ppm. Levels above 0.1 ppm may cause some people to feel sick or weak," says the mechanical engineer with a vast amount of knowledge on the topics of built environment, indoor environmental quality, energy modelling and

Formaldehyde emission levels of composite wood products

PRODUCT	EMISSION LEVEL (PPM OF FORMALDEHYDE)
Hardwood Plywood – Veneer Core	0.05
Hardwood Plywood – Composite Core	0.05
Medium-Density Fibreboard	0.11
Thin Medium-Density Fibreboard	0.13
Particleboard	0.09

SOURCE: UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY



Asadi: Presence of formaldehyde in indoor air is common, especially in new homes and newly renovated homes.

building energy conservation.

He notes that the primary way that people may be exposed to formaldehyde is by inhaling it through the air, or absorbing it in liquid form.

When dissolved in water, it is called formalin, which is an industrial disinfectant. It can also be used as a preservative in food, medicines and personal skincare products, such as antiseptics, lotions and sunscreen, soaps and cosmetics.

"Some people might experience uncomfortable symptoms such as a burning sensation in the eyes, throat and nose, wheezing, coughing, skin irritation and nausea. But the tricky part is, at the same level of exposure, some people could be extremely sensitive to the formaldehyde while others have no reaction to it," he adds.

For this reason, most individuals tend to ignore the existence of formaldehyde in their indoor environments unless it has impacted their health.

Asadi notes that the effect of formaldehyde on human health is a controversial issue due to the lack of information about its long term health effects.

"There is some evidence based on laboratory tests that inhaled

formaldehyde can cause cancer in rats. Furthermore, some research reports also revealed that formaldehyde may cause leukaemia in humans," he elaborates.

Where does it come from?

There are a variety of indoor sources for formaldehyde emissions: plywood and pressed wood furniture, gas appliances, glues and resins used in interior design, furniture industry and in building construction.

Interior fittings like wallpaper and floor materials (medium-density fibreboard), some paints and coatings as well as personal items such as nail polish also contain this harmful substance.

"Generally, the presence of formaldehyde in indoor air is common, especially in new homes and newly renovated or refurbished homes due to the existence of large amounts of plywood. Pressed wood emits a small amount of formaldehyde over time," says Asadi.

Even if formaldehyde is not used in the furniture or other items, this organic compound could also be produced during the combustion process involved in smoking, cooking or car exhaust fumes.

However, one shouldn't be too paranoid over formaldehyde as it breaks down in the air and easily dissolves in water - either way, it won't last long.

"Nevertheless, humid and high indoor temperatures could increase the level of formaldehyde emission and could cause one to be sick at home or in the office," says Asadi.

He adds that the size of the furniture also matters as research shows that the larger the furniture, the higher the level of formaldehyde it emits over time.

Ways to get rid of it

Asadi says the best way to eliminate or get rid of formaldehyde is by reducing furniture or products made by materials that contain high levels of formaldehyde and to enhance indoor air ventilation.

Ways to reduce formaldehyde levels at home

1.

Check for formaldehyde safety labels when buying furniture or ask the vendor whether the product has been tested for formaldehyde



2.

Improve indoor air ventilation by opening up windows at home



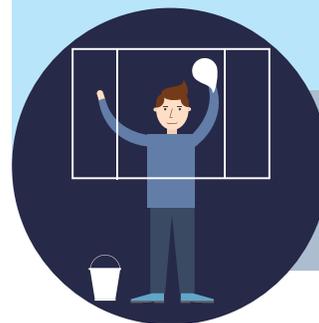
3.

Use an air purifier, dehumidifier or air-conditioner when room is humid and temperature is high



4.

Wipe furniture with wet cloth (formaldehyde dissolves in water)



Easy steps like opening the windows at home, using an air purifier, dehumidifier or air-conditioner could help enhance indoor air ventilation.

Besides furniture and products that contain formaldehyde, smoking is also one of the main sources of formaldehyde production along with other toxic chemicals. Keeping your home smoke-free will help reduce the formaldehyde levels at home, he says.

Currently, there are no guidelines on formaldehyde in composite wood products in Malaysia, but Asadi notes that the US Environmental Protection Agency has a set of formaldehyde emission standards for composite wood products which could serve as a reference for consumers.

According to Asadi, the level of formaldehyde in composite wood products can be measured on site with advanced devices.

For individuals who want to measure levels of formaldehyde in

the home or office, there are some DIY test kits available. Alternatively, there is the formaldehyde or indoor air quality measurement badge which is used as a data collector - one could just place it within the home or office for around 24 hours and send it to a lab for analysis.

He adds that some furniture manufacturers of composite wood products will test the safety level of formaldehyde and label the product as safe, allowing consumers to choose such products.

"The government could also consider amending the building codes, namely the Uniform Building By-Laws 1984, to include a parameter for formaldehyde acceptable limits in all buildings in Malaysia," he says.

For newly built homes, if one finds oneself facing some symptomatic discomfort in the house, even after cleaning the house and improving its ventilation, it's better to get indoor air quality experts in for an assessment.





Urban planners look to Vienna to solve housing crises

BY SOPHIE MAKRIS

VIENNA, AUSTRIA: Vienna's sumptuous imperial palaces may be the main draw for the many millions of tourists visiting every year.

But for urban planning experts from all over the world, the Austrian capital's more humble abodes are of greater interest as they search for solutions to the housing crises plaguing many of Europe's cities.

Wolfgang Mack, a 72-year-old pensioner, is a proud tenant of the city's oldest social housing project in the 15th district, just 15 minutes from the historic centre.

While social housing may bear some stigma in other countries, Mack's estate boasts tidy green spaces and well-kept facades, as well as easy access to public transport and other amenities.

And because Mack has been a tenant for several decades, his monthly rent amounts to just 300 euros (RM1,420) for a 90 sq m apartment — a bargain even by the standards of Vienna's social housing.

"I ask myself how people manage to live in other big cities," Mack says.

In fact, the average rent in Vienna is just 9.6 euros per sq m, to the envy of other big European metropolises.

According to a recent study by Deloitte, the equivalent figure stood at 13 euros per sq m in Prague, over 17 euros in Copenhagen and Barcelona, and an eye-watering 26 euros in Paris and London.

Vienna's extensive stock of social housing is one of the reasons why it remains so affordable, says Karin Ramser, head of Wiener Wohnen, the centre of city's public housing policy.

"The fact that our market is not entirely in the hands of the private sector is generating more and more interest," she says.

According to official figures, around 60% of the city's 1.8 million inhabitants live in a property owned either publicly or by housing associations.

And in both cases the rent is capped, which experts say helps act as a brake on prices in the private sector too.

Mack's estate — and his own family story — reflects the pioneering role Vienna played in the development of social housing.

"My grandmother came to live in this estate in 1923, I was born here and my daughter has just moved in too," he says.

That is typical of generations of particularly working class Viennese who have benefited from the social housing policies of successive left-wing administrations since World War I, earning the city the sobriquet of "Red Vienna".

Between 1923 and 1934, the city's social-democratic municipi-



Karl-Marx-Hof, a community owned apartment building in Vienna, Austria.



Raben-Hof, another community owned apartment building in Vienna, Austria.



Wolfgang Mack, 72, is a resident of one of the oldest community owned apartment buildings in Schmelz, Vienna.

The average rent in Vienna is just 9.6 euros per sq m. The equivalent figure stood at 13 euros per sq m in Prague, over 17 euros in Copenhagen and Barcelona, and an eye-watering 26 euros in Paris and London.

pal governments built more than 60,000 housing units, making Vienna a showcase for the latest innovations in public housing.

The left came back into power after World War II and has ruled the city ever since. And that has

had positive effects, according to Yvonne Franz, researcher at Vienna University's geography department.

"Lots of European cities have gradually sold off their housing stock because they see the upkeep costs as a burden on the public purse, but Vienna has taken the opposite view," she says.

Wiener Wohnen owns around 220,000 housing units — a quarter of the city's entire stock — making it the biggest public landlord in Europe.

A further 200,000 units are owned by associations who agree to cap rents in return for public subsidies.

Spending on housing and other aspects of urban planning is financed by a nationwide tax paid by all businesses and employees.

However, the Viennese model is not without its problems.

One point of controversy is that rental contracts for subsidised housing are awarded virtually for life, regardless of any changes in the tenant's status or income, and can even be passed on to relatives.

The European Commission has criticised the system for distorting competition, but municipal authorities have stood firm, arguing that it preserves the city's social mix.

Mack says the residents on his estate come from "very different backgrounds".

Many tenants have only modest incomes but even the better-off residents "don't want to leave because life is so good here," he says.

That social mix may be harder to sustain in future as Vienna's population booms — 100,000 people have moved to the city in the past three years alone, and the population could pass the pre-World War

peak of two million before 2030.

In the private sector, rents rose by 42% between 2008 and 2016, with land speculation "making it more and more difficult, if not impossible, to build affordable housing," says Karl Wurm from Austria's federation of housing associations.

In late November, the city slapped tough conditions on major new housing developments.

If developers want to receive public subsidies, the rent for two-thirds of their new units cannot exceed five euros per sq m.

The city authorities hope the measure will stimulate a new "housing revolution".

But the right-wing opposition condemned it as "dirigiste" and "retrograde socialism" which would discourage private investment. — AFP

PICTURES BY AFP

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LIDM01030212

RM1,680,000

Mutiara Gombak, Gombak, Selangor

Type: Semidee Tenure: Freehold
Built-up: 3,340 sq ft Land size: 3,200 sq ft
Bedrooms: 5 Bathrooms: 5



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+6019 212 4461



LIDM01034319

RM1,980,000

Desa ParkCity (Southlake), Kuala Lumpur

Type: Terraced House Tenure: Freehold
Built-up: 2,159 sq ft Land size: 1,875 sq ft
Bedrooms: 3 Bathrooms: 4



Sam Chai (REN 16483)
CORNERSTONE REALTY
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LIDM01028936

RM1,067,800

Jalan Anggerik Eria, Kota Kemuning, Selangor

Type: Terraced House Tenure: Freehold
Built-up: 2,200 sq ft Land size: 4,133 sq ft
Bedrooms: 4 Bathrooms: 3



Sherry Chew (REN 0701)
CBD PROPERTIES SDN BHD
E (1) 1197/4
+6016 218 2301



LIDM01018173

RM988,000

Mutiara Gombak, Gombak, Selangor

Type: Terraced house Tenure: Freehold
Built-up: 2,000 sq ft Land size: 1,400 sq ft
Bedrooms: 4 Bathrooms: 3



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LIDM01018058

RM4,600,000

Dedaun, Ampang Hilir, Kuala Lumpur

Type: Condominium Tenure: Leasehold
Built-up: 4,327 sq ft
Bedrooms: 3 Bathrooms: 4



Tiffany Tang (REN 09427)
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E (1) 1823
+6012 224 8866



LIDM01043262

RM1,350,000

The Rainz, Bukit Jalil, Kuala Lumpur

Type: Condominium Tenure: Freehold
Built-up: 1,772 sq ft
Bedrooms: 5 Bathrooms: 4



Weivein Chong (REN 27474)
HARTAMAS REAL ESTATE (M) SDN BHD
E (1) 1439
+6016 916 5065



LIDM01046303

RM1,192,000

TTDI Ascencia, Taman Tun Dr Ismail, Kuala Lumpur

Type: Condominium Tenure: Freehold
Built-up: 1,393 sq ft
Bedrooms: 3 Bathrooms: 3



Ann Soh (REN 03232)
ONE SUNTERRA PROPERTIES SDN BHD
E (1) 1629
+6018 369 8650



LIDM01038100

RM515,000

Villa Wangsamias, Wangsa Maju, Kuala Lumpur

Type: Condominium Tenure: Freehold
Built-up: 1,270 sq ft
Bedrooms: 3 Bathrooms: 2



Zull Ariffin (PEA1829)
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VE (1) 0233
+6019 212 4461



LIDM01041801

RM448,800

Razak City Residences, Salak Selatan, Kuala Lumpur

Type: Condominium Tenure: Leasehold
Built-up: 1,045 sq ft
Bedrooms: 3 Bathrooms: 3



Terence Yap (REN 10998)
GS REALTY SDN BHD
E (1) 1307
+6012 232 9042



LIDM01038238

RM930,000

Desa ParkCity (The Westside III), Kuala Lumpur

Type: Condominium Tenure: Freehold
Built-up: 1,077 sq ft
Bedrooms: 2 Bathrooms: 2



Sam Chai (REN 16483)
CORNERSTONE REALTY
E (3) 1198
+6012 280 5101



LIDM01044952

RM620,000

TTDI Ascencia, Taman Tun Dr Ismail, Kuala Lumpur

Type: Condominium Tenure: Freehold
Built-up: 702 sq ft
Bedrooms: studio Bathroom: 1



Ann Soh (REN 03232)
ONE SUNTERRA PROPERTIES SDN BHD
E (1) 1629
+6018 369 8650



LIDN01405961

RMRM4,000/mth

Royal Regent Sri Putramas III, Dutamas, Kuala Lumpur

Type: Condominium Tenure: Freehold
Built-up: 1,722 sq ft
Bedrooms: 4 Bathrooms: 2



Henry Lim (REN 06092)
RINA PROPERTIES ASIA SDN BHD
E (1) 1607
+6017 698 8618



LIDM01034704

RM3,600/mth

Desa ParkCity (The Westside III), Kuala Lumpur

Type: Condominium Tenure: Freehold
Built-up: 1,377 sq ft
Bedrooms: 2 Bathrooms: 2



Sam Chai (REN 16483)
CORNERSTONE REALTY
E (3) 1198
+6012 280 5101



LIDM01032631

RM6,500/mth

Residensi 22, Mont Kiara, Kuala Lumpur

Type: Condominium Tenure: Freehold
Built-up: 1,878 sq ft
Bedrooms: 3 Bathrooms: 3



Kelly Tan (PEA1960)
IQI REALTY SDN. BHD.
E (1) 1584
+6012 266 0695



LIDM01036327

RM5,200,000

Taman Tun Dr Ismail, Kuala Lumpur

Type: Shop Tenure: Freehold
Built-up: 5,760 sq ft Land size: 1,920 sq ft



Jacob Chin (REN 06912)
BIG PLUS PROPERTIES (PJ) SDN BHD
E (1) 1834/3
+6017 612 2331



LIDM01042995

RM45,942.50/mth

Plaza Equatorial, KL City, Kuala Lumpur

Type: Office Tenure: Freehold
Built-up: 5,405 sq ft



Meifen Low (REN 06451)
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