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A PARADIGM SHIFT to the builders

Can the new normal push our developers to adopt prefabricated construction methods? Or will traditional ways hold sway? Some experts argue that the transformation is worth the effort. See Pages 6 and 7.



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China: 'Green' housing project turns into 'mosquito-infested jungle'

A green housing project in Chengdu, China which was meant to be a "vertical forest" with gardens on every balcony has not turned out the way it was supposed to. In fact, it has become an urban disaster.

According to an AFP report, instead of being the "eco-paradise" it was planned to be, Qiyi City Forest Garden has become mosquito infested as the projects' towers were "overrun by their own plants".

This was because only 10 families have moved in since the project was completed in 2018, reported China-based Global Times.

The plants that were supposed to provide the "forest" ran riot with nobody looking after them, which in turn attracted the blood sucking bugs.



SIME DARBY PROPERTY



Bandar Malaysia development officially kicks off

Bandar Malaysia, the single largest city development in the region, is now ready to take off with the settlement of the RM1.24 billion payment due to TRX City Sdn Bhd (TRXC), a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Minister of Finance Incorporated (MoF Inc) by IWH-CREC Sdn Bhd.

In a statement on Sept 15, 2020, IWH-CREC said the paid amount was

under the revised share sale agreement and shareholders' agreement, which include the 10% deposit and a RM500 million advance payment to TRXC.

Under the agreements, the company will take up a 60% stake in Bandar Malaysia Sdn Bhd, the project's master developer, from TRXC, which will hold the remaining 40%.

IWH-CREC is a joint-venture between Iskandar Waterfront Holdings Sdn Bhd (IWH) and China state-owned enterprise, China Railway Engineering Corporation (CREC).

Muhyiddin: MCO may have to be reimposed if Covid-19 cases rise sharply

Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin reminded the people that the Movement Control Order (MCO) may have to be reimposed if there is a sharp increase in Covid-19 cases in the country, despite the negative impact on the economy.

During the Malaysia Day address, he said the government will also not hesitate to reimpose the Enhanced Movement Control Order (EMCO) in areas with a high number of Covid-19 cases.

"We cannot go anywhere but just stay at home as is happening in Kota Setar (district) in Kedah right now," he said in a special address to the nation on the current Covid-19 situation in the country," he added.

NCER's economy to grow by RM300b

The Northern Corridor Investment Authority (NCIA) expects the Northern Corridor Economic Region's (NCER) economy to grow by RM300 billion through initiatives outlined in the newly-launched Strategic Development Plan 2021-2025 (SDP).

Through the SDP, the northern region is projected to create more than

160,000 new jobs and over 42,000 entrepreneurs, while the cumulative investment is forecast to grow to RM146.5 billion. However, the target is expected to be delayed by two years due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Up to July this year, the NCIA has achieved RM115.9 billion in cumulative realised investments and created more than 140,000 jobs in the NCER.

Govt to standardise regulations, taxes for hotels, Airbnb

The standardisation of several issues involving the hotel sector and Airbnb, such as regulations and taxes, will be finalised soon, said Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Economy) Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed.

He said the move was to give a new lease of life to the tourism industry, especially hotel operators, who are more affected by the Covid-19 pandemic as they are bound by regulations compared with Airbnb operators.

He said discussions on the matter

HOTLINES

For COVID-19 screening or tests, contact the **Health Ministry's Crisis Preparedness and Response Centre (CPRC)**

Tel: 03-8881 0200,

03-8881 0600

and 03-8881 0700

from 8.30am to 5pm daily
Or Email: cprc@moh.gov.my

For more information, go to CPRC Telegram channel at **<https://t.me/cprckkm>**

For queries on the Restricted Movement Control Order, call 03-8888 2010.

were in progress between the Tourism, Arts and Culture Ministry, Housing and Local Government Ministry and the state governments, with a committee chaired by the Chief Secretary to the Government (KSN) Tan Sri Mohd Zuki Ali tasked to resolve the issues.

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Gram-worthy gems at #ParkCity

We are always on the lookout for pretty sights to take our next photo and sharing the moments on social media. For a start, Malaysia has no shortage of Insta-worthy spots. The majestic Petronas Twin Towers, Batu Caves, Mount Kinabalu and a slew of hipster cafes stand ready for the avid Instagrammer to snap away.

Now, set your sights away from the tourist traps and crowded spots. These are several picturesque spots for you to discover in the city for your next Insta-post or story. From idyllic parks, manicured landscapes to New Urbanism designs, they provide a gorgeous canvas to up your #OOTD game and rake up the likes.

So, mask on, stick to physical distancing and snap away for a memorable Instagram feed.



Magnificent sculpture overlooking the lake at The Central Park.

FIRST STOP

Desa ParkCity, Kuala Lumpur

The sprawling 473-acre Desa ParkCity near the heart of Kuala Lumpur offers a daily dose of nature on top of city-living.

This award-winning township is a pioneer of seamlessly blending natural landscape, community and city living all in one. Ditch your automobile as the entire township is walkable and home to a thriving residential neighbourhood, commercial plaza, a mall, a medical centre, an international school, club-house and like its namesake — parks!

The lush greenery evokes a calming and serene atmosphere and also, as the ideal backdrop for you to flex for your gram.



City of parks

The parks at Desa ParkCity are not-to-be-missed. On a sunny day, the tree-lined, meandering pathways and a scenic lake at The Central Park deserve a spot (or many) on your Instagram feed. Share the moments with your furry kids too as it is a pet-friendly park. Don't stop there! Head over to other parks in Desa ParkCity such as The West Park for its meandering pathways and mini urban jungle feel.



Take to the streets

The entire Desa ParkCity township is seamlessly connected and walkable. Accompanying you each step of the way are rows of idyllic greenery. #NoFilter is needed as the lush landscape brings out the best of what nature can offer. So, find a spot, take out your phone and let your creativity do the rest.



The pulsating centre

Now that you have experienced the parks, it is time to unwind further and immerse yourself in British colonial-inspired architecture that comes with a contemporary twist. Unlike traditional shophouses, Plaza Arkadia is created with a completely new mixed-use district that uses traditional urban elements of arcade, park, streets and plazas. It is enhanced by the landscape planning around the open-air courtyards, so that the upper floors also enjoy an immersive open-air experience.



Lights, camera, action!

The sun is getting low so some illumination goes a long way. Capture the glow from light-strung trees for the glittering, dreamy and almost magical Insta-post. This spot at The Waterfront Park Entrance is a place where you can relax, socialise, make new friends amid the vibrant environment by the park.

SECOND STOP

Marina ParkCity & ParkCity Eastwood, Miri

Now let's take a detour. Moving away from KL to across the South China Sea, the small oil city of Miri has so much to offer. A gateway to Sarawak's national parks, this vibrant coastal city and also Sarawak's second largest city is a haven of Instagram-worthyspots. On your next visit there, do check out the Marina ParkCity and ParkCity Eastwood townships.

As you snap away, pause for a moment, and take in the glorious view of the sea with its waterfront boardwalk and park in Marina ParkCity. This is just one of the many sights awaiting capture on your Instagram feed.



THIRD STOP

ParkCity Hanoi, Vietnam

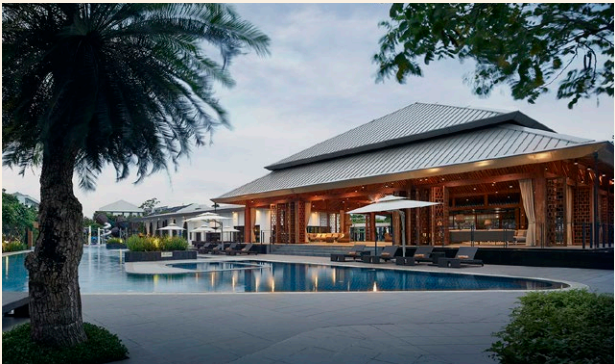
When international travel resumes, satiate your wanderlust in Hanoi, Vietnam. If you could only associate Hanoi with its crazy traffic conditions, you have not seen the entire city...

For in the heart of Hanoi city is a first-of-its-kind township called ParkCity Hanoi — an oasis of sorts.

Can't imagine how it looks? Just visualise the award-winning Desa ParkCity township in Kuala Lumpur. Think lush greenery, wide-open spaces that provide a sanctuary from bustling Hanoi.

Did you know? Both ParkCity Hanoi and Desa ParkCity are about 13km away from their respective city centres.

Ready with your camera? Escape to nature and capture the picturesque landscape made accessible with pedestrian-friendly streets and meandering walkways across the township.



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FEATURE



The multipurpose sports court at Flat Seri Kedah is now lit up with colours of Malaysia's national flag. The refurbishment project involved outdoor futsal cum badminton courts, concrete slides and a gazebo.

Colours of Jalur Gemilang that light up the spirit of unity



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Sayangi Rumahku

In partnership with
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THE COATINGS EXPERT

BY **CHELSEY POH**

Red, blue, yellow and white are the colours of Malaysia's national flag. These heart warming colors have now lit up the multi purpose sports court at Perumahan Awam Seri Kedah or Flat Seri Kedah in Gombak Setia, Kuala Lumpur, calling up to a spirit of unity.

The outdoor futsal cum badminton courts at Flat Seri Kedah have caught the residents' attention after putting on its colourful new 'dress', all thanks to the Sayangi Rumahku campaign initiated by Paramount Property, Nippon Paint Malaysia and EdgeProp.my.

This joint effort is in support of the National Community Policy or Dasar Komuniti Negara (DKN) formulated by the Housing and Local Government Ministry (KPKT) that aims to improve the lives of the B40 group.

The painting work in Flat Seri Kedah started on Sept 5, 2020, and was set for completion on Sept 23 but everything was done way ahead of schedule.

Paramount Property CEO Beh Chun Chong expressed his excitement when witnessing the completion of the final sports court under the Sayangi Rumahku campaign which started in July 2019.

He notes that the refurbishment work was completed one day before Malaysia Day, making it even more meaningful as the residents here celebrate the blissful occasion with a brand new looking court.

The painting work of Flat Seri

Kedah was supposed to be completed in March, however, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the implementation of movement control order (MCO), the refurbishment and painting works were postponed.

Nevertheless, the colourful sports court definitely is a timely present for mood lifting. "The colours of our national flag promotes the spirit of unity in the community. The vibrant colours of the court will cheer people up and with more positive energy we can move forward well and prosper.

"Although the physical distancing practice is currently in place, I'm sure that after the Covid-19 crisis, the court will serve its full purpose to the residents here. I feel proud that we are able to carry out such a meaningful activity that contributes back to the community," Beh told EdgeProp.my after participating in the painting work at Flat Seri Kedah on Sept 15.

Painting work in Flat Seri Kedah

involved the outdoor futsal cum badminton courts, concrete slides and a gazebo, with participation from the staff of Paramount Property, Nippon Paint Malaysia and EdgeProp.my, as well as residents at Flat Seri Kedah. All volunteered themselves to take part in the painting work, which sped up the work process.

More than 400 litres of paint were used for the painting.

(From left): Paramount Property COO Wang Chong Hwa, Paramount Property general manager of sales and marketing Chan Jy Mei, Pong, Beh and Au also participated in the painting work.



Beh (third from left) handed over the futsal goal net to the president of Seri Kedah residents association Hassan Basri Osman (fourth from left).

"This refurbishment is more relevant in the days of Covid-19 than ever before, as it is not just about partaking in activities in the court — it is a sight to behold. The very sight of it gives you a refreshing and welcoming sense, which is much needed in days like this.

"The feedback is clear that the community here is happy [with the initiative]. Residents, some of them are elderly, have taken time to join

the work here," EdgeProp Malaysia editor-in-chief and managing director Au Foong Yee said.

Nippon Paint Malaysia marketing manager Sharon Pong concurs that the joint effort between residents and corporate volunteers is something valuable that makes this campaign meaningful.

Besides transforming the multi-purpose sports court into a colourful and vibrant place, she believes that the improvement in the environment would help to instill good mood and a sense of community to residents here.

"[From my observation] I can tell that they really appreciated the work we are doing. More importantly, they have demonstrated a strong sense of responsibility and unity in enhancing the common facilities and spaces," she added.

Nabil Nasyriq, 27, who grew up in Flat Seri Kedah, said he is now more motivated to utilise the courts after seeing the refurbishment done as they are now equipped with futsal goal posts and badminton nets.

"I would like to play futsal with my friends here. I also hope that the makeover would prompt the residents to make good use and take good care of the courts," he added. Nabil is also the secretary of Seri Kedah residents association.

Flat Seri Kedah has around 1,900 residents. It is the third PPR that saw its courts being refurbished under the Sayangi Rumahku campaign. The first two were PPR Lembah Subang 1 and PPR Seri Cempaka where refurbishment work has been completed with positive feedback from the respective communities.

PICTURES BY LOW YEN YEING | EdgeProp.my



Lowering cost with NEW BUILDING METHODS

BY RACHEL CHEW

The Covid-19 outbreak has changed the game rules, and the conventional labour intensive way might not be feasible in the future. Embracing new construction technologies through prefabricated construction methods is a must for developers and builders.

As cost is still the main concern, the government's political will in encouraging more developers to adopt the new building methods is needed to allow a paradigm shift.

Malaysian Institute of Architects (PAM) president Datuk Ezumi Harzani Ismail says Industrialised Building System (IBS) is not new to the industry, in fact Malaysia has implemented IBS as early as 1966 on two pilot projects — Apartment Tunku Abdul Rahman in Kuala Lumpur and Rifle Range Road Flat in Penang.

However, as at today, only 14% of private developed projects are using IBS, as compared to 70% among government projects.

"The government has been trying to push IBS, hoping to get more involvement from industry players because moving forward, this is the one of the cleanest and most efficient building methods. The questions are: How do we get there? What are the obstacles?" asked Ezumi in EdgeProp Malaysia's virtual fireside chat on Sept 16, 2020.

One of the reasons developers prefer conventional labour intensive building methods is the cheaper cost, in comparison with the millions of ringgit of forefront investment needed before the production of the precast materials for construction.

In addition, new building methods such as IBS or Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) require higher skilled workers, which means they have to pay more to attract talents.



"We are not expecting full industry recovery in the next few years, this could be the perfect time to relook at our construction methodology and move to the next level."
— Ezumi



MiC is an innovative prefabricated construction technology. The buildings are substantially completed offsite in a factory-controlled environment. More interior details such as kitchen cabinets could be added in.

IBS vs MiC

IBS is a technique of construction whereby components, such as slab and wall, are manufactured in a production plant, and later assembled into a construction works.



LOW YEN YEING | EdgeProp.my

"Therefore, the industry players do not bother to use new technology to save on cost... If you go deeper to the value chain, you will realise that the adoption of IBS does affect the downstream players such as building material suppliers. Those are some of the reasons why IBS is not very attractive to the industry here," Ezumi shares.

Entitled "Designing for the Future: Challenging the Challenged", the virtual fireside chat was organised by EdgeProp Malaysia and supported by Nippon Paint Malaysia.

Joining Ezumi as a panelists were Ho & Partners Architects (HPA) executive chairman Nicholas Lik Chi Ho and its deputy director Terence Chan. The session was moderated by EdgeProp Malaysia editor-in-chief and managing director Au Foong Yee.

MiC, an innovative solution

While Malaysia is still chasing the number of IBS projects, Singapore and Hong Kong are far ahead in prefabricated construction technology. Last month, Hong Kong topped up its first MiC project. It is the second city in Asia to use MiC in project development after Singapore, which has adopted the technology on government projects about 10 years ago.

On the differences of IBS and MiC, Ho explained that one of the biggest differences between both is that MiC allows very minimal changes in design once the construction work has kicked start, as many design and planning works are involved before the work commences (← see diagram on the left).

"There are more preparation works than actual site work because the calculation has to be accurate and all the decisions have to be made before the work begins - the tiles, wallpaper, fixture, cabinet and everything you see in a completed unit, they are all produced in the factory and later assembled in the site. Therefore, it is more suitable to use on a simple project than a private development, which generally prioritises the making of sexy and

iconic buildings," said Ho.

As the architect firm that designed the first MiC project in Hong Kong, HPA's Chan shares that a lot of research and study have been conducted to make this project a better version of Singapore's buildings, such as the improvement of wall joints to prevent water leaking.

"As space is expensive in Hong Kong, we also calculate every module size carefully to make sure no space is wasted and are accurate to assemble with other modules. Each unit is combined by five modules - the living/dining room, the bathroom and bedroom, the master bedroom, the bathroom and the kitchen. Once they are assembled, the unit is considered almost done as all the interior fixtures and furniture are produced and set in the module in the factory," Chan explains.

CONTINUES NEXT PAGE →

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to view the topping
up of a MiC project
in Hong Kong



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COVER STORY



← FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Where is Malaysia heading to?

Local developers may have been complacent with the conventional and relatively cheap way of construction that is labour intensive, but Malaysian Institute of Architects (PAM) president Datuk Ezumi Harzani observes that the Covid-19 environment has driven industry players to embrace new construction technologies in the new normal.

"I would like to relate this back to our current pandemic. We are not expecting full industry recovery in the next few years, this could be the perfect time to relook at our construction methodology and move to the next level," Ezumi stresses.

On government's readiness, he notes that the authorities have worked hard in pushing the industry to the next level by taking the lead to use Industrialised Building System (IBS) components in selective government projects, such as schools and hostels.

"Malaysia has the technology as we supply some prefabricated components to Singapore. What we do not have here is the will to embrace IBS because the industry players are very comfortable with what we're having now —

the cheap labour cost.

"Our government opened up our foreign labour market when the construction industry was booming in the 1990s and missed the chance to transform the industry during the economic crisis when all industries were at a standstill," he says.

Unlike in Hong Kong, the adoption of new building technology is necessary as the construction labour cost is high and the workforce is ageing, as Hong Kong does not import foreign construction workers.

Compared to Hong Kong and Singapore, Ezumi sees Malaysia still being in the hybrid stage, where the local industry adopted prefabricated components such as slab and wall to be used in traditional construction methods.

"A few years ago, the government tried to stop foreign labour and the industry suffered a lot as they are not prepared. However, industry transformation is the future and we will have to do it even though it won't be easy at the beginning. One day, when the government decides to [finally] stop importing foreign labour, those who are unprepared will be eliminated," Ezumi warns.

Higher cost is just a myth

Cost is the main concern that makes the majority of developers delay their plans in adopting new construction technology, while economies of scale could be the pull factor that encourages industry players to join the bandwagon.

Ho & Partners Architects (HPA) executive chairman Nicholas Lik Chi Ho shares that their Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) project in Hong Kong actually saw savings of up to 40% to 50% for on-site labour, 40% for construction water and four months of construction period.

"Meanwhile, it costs slightly more than the traditional building method for this project as we don't have the economies of scale yet. It is the first

MiC project in Hong Kong. However, we are very bullish on the cost matter because once MiC is widely adopted, the cost will come down," he predicts.

Malaysian Institute of Architects (PAM) president Datuk Ezumi Harzani concurs that developers should look at the adoption of new technologies as a long-term cost saving strategy and start moving out of their comfort zone.

"There must be a paradigm shift to move away from the cost-driven mindset to value-driven. It is very difficult to shift to the next level if we are looking [merely] at the cost. However, if we look at the value, the transformation and effort will be all worth it.



"We are very bullish on the cost matter because once MiC is widely adopted, the cost will come down." — Ho

"By moving the industry from traditional construction methods to the Industrialised Building System (IBS) or even MiC, the [new] methods will bring more benefits to all aspects than just ringgits and cents, such as a cleaner environment, safer and better-quality buildings, as well as lower cost and better time efficiency," he concluded.



"As space is expensive in Hong Kong, we also calculate every module size carefully to make sure no space is wasted and are accurate to assemble with other module." — Chan

The achievement of a MiC project in Hong Kong



- **On-site labour** reduced for 40% to 50%
- **Construction waste** reduced by 40%
- **Crane time** less than 40%
- **Water saving** of more than 5,000m³

- **Material wastage** saved from 5% to 1%
- **Construction time** shortened four months
- **Superstructure works** limited to in-situ concrete connection and lift core

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FEATURE



Left: Sunway Citrine LakeHomes is a gated-and-guarded project located next to the 20-acre Emerald Lake.

Below: Artist's impression of Sunway Citrine LakeHomes.

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PICTURES BY SUNWAY PROPERTY

The up and coming CBD in Johor — MEDINI

BY CHIN WAI LUN

Poised to be the Central Business District (CBD) of Iskandar Puteri (formerly known as Nusajaya), Medini is growing steadily with the on-going infrastructure development and numerous property projects that will turn this quiet region of southern Johor into a vibrant city in years to come.

Flanked by newly developed residential areas, leisure and tourism district — Puteri Harbour, the state government and administrative centre — Kota Iskandar and the prestigious education hub — EduCity, Medini has all it takes to become the investment destination for property buyers and also homebuyers who are looking for modern homes in a self-sustained township in the south.

Launched in 2007, Medini Iskandar Malaysia Sdn Bhd, the master developer of the 2,300-acre urban

township, has invested over RM4 billion on building 'best-in-class' infrastructure such as utility pipes, modern roads, security, and sewerage that are ready for connection, allowing investors to enter Medini on a 'plug-and-play' basis. The city also boasts a 22km-long cycling path and 46 parks on 342 acres of green open space.

The township development comprises four integrated development clusters, namely The Compass (luxury development cluster), The Crescent (lifestyle retail and business park cluster), The Pulse (premier development cluster) and The Park (residential and boutique commercial cluster).

"Over the years, many prominent developers have gained a foothold in Medini. With the concerted effort between the public and private sectors, a few catalytic developments such as Legoland, Gleneagles Hospital and Iskandar Malaysia Studios had be-

gun operations," KGV International Property Consultants Sdn Bhd executive director Samuel Tan tells EdgeProp.my.

Notably, potential investors or homebuyers in Medini get to enjoy Real Property Gains Tax (RPGT) exemption, no minimum threshold for foreign purchasers, no corporate tax (selected businesses up till 2020) under the special Medini incentives aimed to spur investment in the area.

Banking on strategic location

Medini is en-route to be one of the most prime locations for property in the southern region. For a start, it is about a 15-minute drive to Singapore via the Second Link bridge from the Coastal Highway Southern Link (CHSL). Additionally, the toll-free Iskandar Coastal Highway connects the area to Johor Bahru. Meanwhile, the prestigious education hub, EduCity (University of Reading Malaysia, University of Southampton and more) is less than 5km away.

"The CHSL linking Medini to the Second Link bridge towards Singapore benefits residents staying within Medini commuting to Singapore for work purposes and Singaporeans visiting the western part of Johor Bahru," says Tan.

Additionally, in Sunway Iskandar, there are daily public bus services (Causeway Link) to Singapore (Jurong East and Boon Lay).

The self-sustaining city of Medini also boasts many amenities such as the Gleneagles Hospital Medini, Legoland Theme Park, Edible Park,

Sunway Big Box (a retail hybrid park, first of its kind in the country that features big warehouse concept stores in an open-air strip mall environment) and more.

Speaking of prominent developers, one such example would be Sunway Property's township in Medini — Sunway Iskandar. The integrated sustainable development offers a synergic blend of nature's beauty with contemporary city lifestyle — some 40% of the township is filled with greenery and water bodies.

For instance, the Sunway Citrine Lakehomes — a landed development in the township's Lakewood precinct. Consisting of 361 double-storey linked houses, double-storey link cluster homes and townhouses, community hall with badminton courts and green jogging paths, the gated-and-guarded project is located next to the 20-acre Emerald Lake, Sunway International School and the mixed development Sunway Citrine Residences & Hub. Those commuting to Singapore will also benefit from the Causeway Link bus stop at the area.

Now that's convenience at your doorstep.

"Sunway Iskandar has got a lot of potential in the long term. It is a holistic place where children run free, neighbours bond and a modern city where sustainable living prospers," notes KGV's Tan.

"While the property market sentiment is weak these two to three years as a result of a confluence negative factors like US-China trade war and Covid-19, the area will be popular again when the markets rebound. Generally, the property market is still stable with landed residential properties remaining a popular choice.

"In addition, Sunway Iskandar has launched the last phase of Citrine Lakehomes on June 21, 2020 and it has achieved 70% sales. Meanwhile, its Phase 1 and 2 homes are fully sold. This shows that there are still buyers looking for the property regardless of the uncertainty of the market," Tan added.

Generally, prices and transactions for landed houses in Iskandar Puteri remained stable. According to

data from EdgeProp Research, as of early September 2020, there were 37 transactions for landed properties in Iskandar Puteri with an average transacted price of RM713,811 or RM379 psf.

For the entire 2019, there were 204 landed property transactions with an average transacted price of RM748,461 or RM377 psf.

"For those who are buying for own occupation, this is the best time to start scouting around and do some serious homework. As long as the property ticks all the boxes, it is worthwhile to buy. For investment properties, one will have to look at the yield and must be comfortable with the return sustainability. Tenant profile is crucial," Tan advises.

In it for the long-term

Not without its gripes, land ownership in Medini is an unconventional one, notes Tan. "The authorities should also consider converting the lease of Medini to a proper leasehold or even freehold tenure like that of Danga Bay and Bandar Baru UDA," he explains.

Nevertheless, he still holds the view that the long-term prospects for Medini is good.

"In view of the strategic location with its proximity to Kota Iskandar (the administrative centre of Johor Bahru) and catalytic developments such as EduCity and Puteri Harbour; good master planning and excellent infrastructure; Medini definitely has the potential to be the second Central District Centre (CBD) of Johor after Johor Bahru.

"To build on the existing strengths, the authorities and master developer should look into the issues such as land lease, high plot ratio, oversupply of high-rise developments in the area.

"Property market moves in cycles. The current economic doldrums and Covid-19 pandemic will pass. To ride the next wave, it is pertinent to resolve all the issues. In particular, the land lease issue must be resolved quickly and amicably," notes Tan.



Proximity to various amenities is one of the biggest advantages of Medini.

PROPERTY CHAT



For many naïve and unwary purchasers, signing a booking pro-forma with a housing developer, its agent or lawyer and paying a sum of booking fee before signing the formal Sale & Purchase Agreement (SPA) is part and parcel of the standard operating procedure to purchase a residential property. So, it seems!

The law prohibits collection of 'booking fees'

Contrary to popular belief, booking fees are prohibited by the Housing Development (Control and Licensing) Regulations 1989 ('HDR'). As stated in Housing Development Regulation 11(2). "No person including parties acting as stakeholders shall collect any payment by whatever name called except as prescribed by the contract of sale".

The statutory form of sale and purchase agreement provides that the first 10% of the purchase price is only payable immediately upon the signing of the SPA. The scope of prohibition is wide enough to include es-

BY DATUK CHANG KIM LOONG



tate agents, lawyers and any third parties purportedly acting as stakeholders for the housing developer in respect of collection of the booking fees.

This prohibition, first introduced way back in the early 1980s, is actually a good form of protection designed to prevent an errant developer from treating a booking pro-forma as a binding contract to gain a contractual right to forfeit the booking fee already paid by a purchaser who failed to sign an SPA, when so requested.

There have been wanton cases of purchasers crying foul when they are denied a refund of booking fees by some unscrupulous housing developers. In many cases, promises made by sale representatives that the booking fee is fully refundable if buyers could not secure a bank loan are not honoured.

Vulnerable buyers are left with no options but to forgo the booking fee simply because they feel that the cost and legal quagmire to pursue the matter does not commensurate

with the amount paid. It simply is too bitter and cumbersome for those in such acrimonious situations.

Have wrongdoers even been prosecuted by the authorities?

Nonetheless, there has been no reported prosecution in the Courts (of Law) against those housing developers and sale agents who flout this prohibition. No one has been prosecuted for this blatant disregard for the law, to the best of my knowledge.

This fact has been declared to us by the enforcers (of the laws) ie the Ministry of Housing & Local Government during our frequent meetings with them. Enforcement is lax; if there is any enforcement action taken save and except imposing a meagre 'compound fines' and a slap on the wrist. This led us to ponder whether a more systematic approach of regulating booking fees should be adopted in place of this absolute prohibition.

Since enforcement is lax and no one has been brought to the Courts to be punished, then why not consider legitimising collection of the 'booking fees'?

Option to purchase – Cooling-off period

For starters, a housing developer shall grant an **option to purchase** to an intending purchaser in exchange for a reasonable deposit of a sum of money referred to as 'booking fee'. A reasonable duration shall be given to the intending purchasers to freely consider whether to exercise the option to purchase the property or not. No penalty shall be imposed on the intending purchasers if they decide not to exercise the option within the option period.

There shall be at least a duration of **thirty (30) days** (hereinafter referred to as the 'option period') from the date of collection of booking fee for intending purchasers to consider whether if they want to exercise the option to purchase the property. During the option period, a developer shall not accept any other booking from another party in respect of the same property.

An intending purchaser shall be given the full right to either exercise the option before expiry of the option period or decline to exercise the option without the need to furnish any reasons whatsoever to justify his or her decision.

If a purchaser decides to exercise the option, the booking fee shall be utilised to partially set-off the purchase price.

If an intending purchaser decides not to exercise the option, the booking fee shall be **refunded in full** to the intending purchaser within **14 days** from the communication of the intending purchaser's decision to the developer, failing which interest at the rate of 10% per annum calculated on a daily basis over the booking fee shall be imposed and payable by the developer to the (intending) purchaser.

There should also be a provision that the developer is not permitted to deduct any form of so called '**administrative fees**' in attending to the refund and such refund must be made in full.

During the option period, all the **relevant available information** pertaining to the subject property including the estimated parcel/land area, the layout of the property, specification of the building, details of the common property (for stratified developments), Schedule of Parcel and details of the approved building plans etc. and a

copy of the SPA shall be made available to the intending purchaser to enable him/her to make an informed decision whether to exercise the option.

The amount of booking fee should not be excessive and in all cases shall not be more than **RM5,000 or 1% of the purchase price, whichever is the lower**. After all, a booking fee merely serves as a security for the developer to grant a right of option to the purchasers and also to allow the developer to gauge the marketability and saleability of their project. It is also intended to convince the bridging financiers that the project has reached a reasonable margin of sales and give credence to the project undertaken by the housing developer. The quantum of bookings reflects the level of demand of the housing project and they are assured that the project will not add to the 'overhang' statistics.

There have been wanton cases of purchasers crying foul when they are denied a refund of booking fees by some unscrupulous housing developers.

The booking fees collected from potential buyers shall be placed in a 'fidelity fund' under the Housing Development Project Account to facilitate the refund exercise in the event that the option is declined. This is also to prevent unscrupulous developers or their authorised agents from absconding with the booking fee. Housing developers shall be held responsible whether the booking fee is being collected by their appointed authorised agents or lawyers, as stakeholders.

Prescribed option to purchase form – Booking fee

In order to ensure uniformity, a standard booking form shall be prescribed in the relevant law such as the HDR. The rights, entitlement and obligation of respective parties shall be drafted in plain language and set out in the standard booking form with the dateline to exercise option clearly indicated. All the terms and conditions in the standard booking form shall be explained to the intending purchasers before the developer collects any form of booking fee.

This standard approach to a booking fee will legitimise its collection while the refund process will provide certainty and recourse to the treatment of such fees. If the enforcer is unable to effectively prohibit the collection of 'booking fees' by housing developers, we might as well outdo them and thereby possibly gain an advantage.

There's an old Scottish proverb: 'Better bend than break' carries no connotation of surrender. It is used to indicate that the way to take over the opposition's strength is to adopt their positions and platform.

PS: It's merely a food for thought and more discussion and feedback need to be obtained.



Datuk Chang Kim Loong is the Hon. Secretary-General of the National House Buyers Association (HBA). HBA can be contacted at:
Email: info@hba.org.my
Website: www.hba.org.my
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Legalising booking fees collection?





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Properties for sale and rent

**RM2,650,000****Kayangan Heights, Shah Alam, Selangor**

Type: Bungalow **Tenure:** Leasehold
Built-up: 6,500 sq ft **Land size:** 9,852 sq ft
Bedroom: 6 **Bathroom:** 7

Hakimi (REN 42898)

WEISE INTERNATIONAL PROPERTY CONSULTANTS
SDN BHD (VE(1)0241) ☎ +6016 222 6377

**RM800,000****SS 7, Kelana Jaya, Selangor**

Type: Terraced house **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 2,200 sq ft **Land size:** 1,475 sq ft
Bedroom: 4 **Bathroom:** 3

Hanif Kasmani (REN 38092)

MAXXAN REALTY SDN BHD (E (1) 1766)
☎ +6010 404 0345

**RM1,100,000****Anggun Residence, Jalan Sultan Ismail, Kuala Lumpur**

Type: Condominium **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 751 sq ft **Bedroom:** 1 **Bathroom:** 2

Harry Anwar (REN 38290)

AZMI & CO ESTATE AGENCY SDN BHD (E 10553)
☎ +6012 912 5034

**RM2,300,000****Megan Avenue II, Jalan Yap Kuan Seng, Kuala Lumpur**

Type: Office **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 3,203 sq ft

Harun (REN 25201)

REJEY PROPERTIES (E (3) 0255)
☎ +6012 373 5305

**RM6,500,000****Taman Melawati, Kuala Lumpur**

Type: Bungalow **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 8,000 sq ft **Land size:** 22,000 sq ft
Bedroom: 8 **Bathroom:** 7

Hayati Husin (REN 01018)

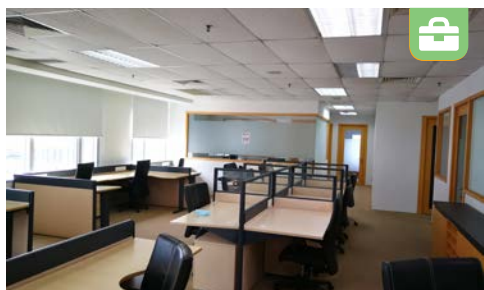
REAPFIELD PROPERTIES (KL) SDN BHD (E (1) 0452/1)
☎ +6019 359 6969

**RM373,240****Zora @ Proton City, Tanjung Malim, Perak**

Type: Terraced house **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 1,586 sq ft **Land size:** 1,540 sq ft
Bedroom: 3 **Bathroom:** 3

Henry Heng (REN 32256)

REAPFIELD PROPERTIES (HQ) SDN BHD (E (1) 0452)
☎ +6012 800 4113

**RM13,888/mth****Plaza Sentral, KL Sentral, Kuala Lumpur**

Type: Office **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 2,200 sq ft

Ho Chin Kun (REN 06503)

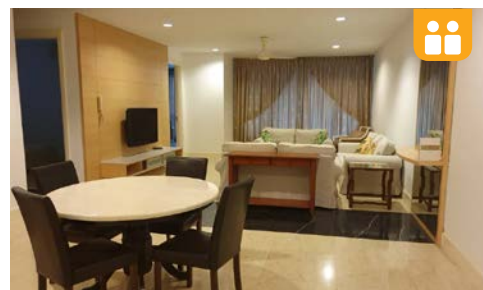
ONE WSM PROPERTY SDN BHD (E (1) 1286)
☎ +6014 626 2623

**RM260,000****Laman Suria Apartment, Kajang, Selangor**

Type: Condominium **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 840 sq ft **Bedroom:** 3 **Bathroom:** 2

Ikhwan Arif (REN 35921)

MAXXAN REALTY SDN BHD (E (1) 1766)
☎ +6012 581 9566

**RM3,500/mth****Mutiara Upper East, Desa Pandan, Kuala Lumpur**

Type: Condominium **Tenure:** Leasehold
Built-up: 1,570 sq ft **Bedroom:** 3 **Bathroom:** 2

Ira Farhana (REN 39414)

ORIENTAL REAL ESTATE SDN BHD (E (1) 1503)
☎ +6018 355 9270

**RM9,000,000****Ledang Heights, Johor**

Type: Bungalow **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 7,500 sq ft **Land size:** 14,740 sq ft
Bedroom: 7 **Bathroom:** 7

Joanne Ooi (REN 37877)

CBD PROPERTIES (JB) SDN BHD (1036252-T)
☎ +6019 735 5123

RENTED FOR

RM5,000 (RM4.80 psf)**Serviced apartment unit, Arcoris Residences@Arcoris Mont'Kiara, Kuala Lumpur**

Concluded by: Catherine Wong (REN 23091)
of Kith and Kin Realty Sdn Bhd
(+6019 663 3377) **When:** June 2020

**DONE
DEAL**



Noteworthy

- Freehold
- Built-up: 1,041 sq ft
- 2-bedroom; 2-bathroom
- High floor with city view
- Fully furnished, ready move-in condition
- Facilities: Swimming pool, wading pool, jacuzzi pool, sauna room, badminton court, multipurpose hall, gymnasium, games room and tennis court
- Amenities: Within walking distance or a short drive to Garden International School, GDM Specialist Centre and the Kiara Medical Centre, Plaza Mont'Kiara, 1 Mont'Kiara Mall, and Mont'Kiara International School.
- Easy accessibility via the major highways in the Klang Valley such as Penchala Link, Sprint Highway and Damansara-Puchong Highway and Federal Highway.

Located in between Kiara 163 and Villa Mont'Kiara, Arcoris Mont Kiara is one of the latest mixed developments in Mont'Kiara, Kuala Lumpur by UEM Sunrise Bhd. Arcoris Residences is a residential part of Arcoris Mont'Kiara.

The two tower Arcoris Residences houses 262 business suites, 275 hotel rooms, 336 SoHo units and 331 serviced apartments.

"Within walking distance, residents or people who work in Arcoris Mont'Kiara could reach various amenities. This has attracted expatriates who are looking for a home in a mature and safe neighborhood," Catherine Wong of Kith and Kin Realty told EdgeProp.my.

In this rental deal, the unit was rented out to a Taiwanese tenant, who loved the location and was looking for a ready move-in unit. Another bonus is that the unit was at a high

floor offering a great city view to the tenant.

"The average monthly rental for a fully renovated similar unit in Arcoris Residences is ranging from RM4,800 to RM5,500. It is good for the tenant as the deal was concluded at only RM5,000, while the unit is in a move-in condition and on the high floor," Wong noted. According to EdgeProp Research, some 32 units in Arcoris Residences changed hands in 2019 with an average transacted price of RM1.02 million or RM1,074 psf. However, no concluded deal was recorded in 2020 as of August.

As at end-August, some 102 units in Arcoris Residences were listed in EdgeProp.my with an average monthly asking rent of RM5,700 or RM5.30. Meanwhile, 58 units are listed for sale for an average asking price of RM1.19 million or RM1,253 psf.

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Residential

Properties for sale and rent

Pro Agents, get your listings featured here! Email support@edgeprop.my or call 03-7733 9000**RM1,200,000****Seksyen 8, Shah Alam, Selangor****Type:** Semidee house **Tenure:** Leasehold
Built-up: 3,800 sq ft **Land size:** 4,400 sq ft
Bedroom: 5 **Bathroom:** 4**Ishak Ramli** (REN 16950)TRANSASIA PROPERTY CONSULTANCY SDN BHD
(VE (I) 0187) ☎ +6013 343 6193**RM13,820,000****Bandar Sungai Long, Selangor****Type:** Residential land **Tenure:** Freehold
Land size: 21 acres**Ivan Chio** (REN 06147)GREENFIELD PROPERTIES (E (2) 1064)
☎ +6012 220 6863**RM349,000****Eastbay Apartment, Johor Bahru, Johor****Type:** Condominium **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 1,097 sq ft **Bedroom:** 3
Bathroom: 2**Ivy Low** (REN 15879)GATHER PROPERTIES SDN BHD (E (I) 1536/4)
☎ +6019 727 3149**RM420,000****Eco Grandeur, Bandar Puncak Alam, Selangor****Type:** Terraced house **Tenure:** Leasehold
Built-up: 1,750 sq ft **Land size:** 1,400 sq ft
Bedroom: 4 **Bathroom:** 3**Izzah Rohaizad** (REN 10356)WEISE INTERNATIONAL PROPERTY CONSULTANTS
SDN BHD (VE (I) 0241) ☎ +6017 422 2179**RM1,838,000****Taman Taynton View, Cheras, Kuala Lumpur****Type:** Bungalow **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 4,800 sq ft **Land size:** 7,500 sq ft
Bedroom: 5 **Bathroom:** 7**Jacinta Lee** (REN 11916)HUTTONS ONEWORLD SDN BHD (E (I) 1286)
☎ +6012 296 1477**RM1,400/mth****Lexa Residence @ The Quartz, Wangsa Maju, Kuala Lumpur****Type:** Condominium **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 819 sq ft **Bedroom:** 3 **Bathroom:** 2**Jack Khor** (REN 05436)PRIMA PROPERTY AGENCY (E (3) 0241)
☎ +6012 800 6826**SOLD FOR****RM1.16 mil** (about RM966 psf)**Condominium unit, Pavilion Hilltop Mont'Kiara, Kuala Lumpur****Concluded by: Ashley Haw** (REN 05137)
of Kith and Kin Realty Sdn Bhd
(+6011 1289 3610) **When:** July 2020**DONE DEAL**

Noteworthy

- Freehold
- Built-up: 1,200 sqft
- Semi-furnished low-floor unit
- 3-bedroom; 4-bathroom
- Nearby amenities: Shopping malls such as Solaris Mont'Kiara and Publika Shopping Gallery; international schools such as Mont'Kiara International School, Garden International School and French School of Kuala Lumpur; clinics and medical centre, eateries and convenience stores
- Easy accessibility via SPRINT Highway, Jalan Duta-Sungai Buloh Highway, DUKE Highway and North-South Expressway

Pavilion Hilltop Mont'Kiara is located at Jalan Changkat Duta Kiara in Mont'Kiara, Kuala Lumpur. Developed by Permata Cermat, a joint venture between Pavilion Group and Kuwait Finance House, the luxury condominium development was completed in 2017.

The premium condominium houses a total of 621 units in three blocks. Facilities include infinity pool, outdoor Jacuzzi, BBQ facilities, children's playground, jogging path, gym and multi-purpose hall.

Real estate negotiator Ashley Haw of Kith and Kin Realty said the buyer likes the unit as it is located close to an abundance of public amenities such as banks, shopping malls, F&B outlets and retail stores.

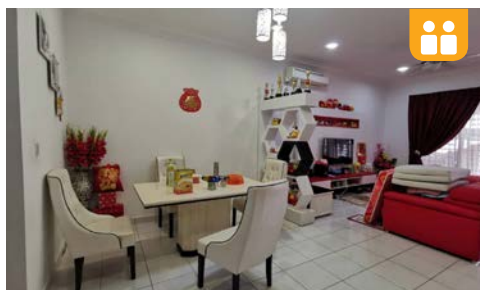
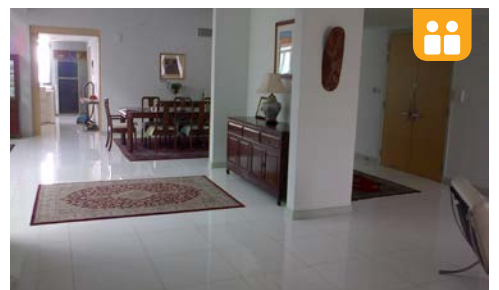
"The buyer was looking for a relatively new condominium in Mont'Kiara for his own stay, as he wanted to move to a new environment. He is impressed by the beautiful landscaping and

the array of facilities in Pavilion Hilltop Mont'Kiara," Haw offered.

Haw shared that the seller has decided to cash out as he doesn't want to manage tenants anymore. The unit was left vacant for around one year and was sold at a slightly lower than market price.

Data from EdgeProp Research showed that there were seven units in Pavilion Hilltop Mont'Kiara sold this year, as at August 14, with an average transacted price of RM1.68 million or RM922 psf. In 2019, a total of 35 units changed hands, with an average transacted price of RM1.74 million or RM969 psf.

As at end-August, 96 units in Pavilion Hilltop Mont'Kiara are listed for sale on the EdgeProp.my property portal, with an average asking price of RM1.97 million or RM1,025 psf. Meanwhile, there are also 86 units looking for tenants with an average asking monthly rent of RM7,730 or RM3.99 psf.

**RM220,000****Diamond Square, Setapak, Kuala Lumpur****Type:** Office **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 938 sq ft **Bathroom:** 1**Jack** (REN 12971)FULL HOMES REALTY SDN BHD (E (I) 1501)
☎ +6019 302 2248**RM3,390,000****USJ 1, Subang Jaya, Selangor****Type:** Factory **Tenure:** Leasehold
Built-up: 6,200 sq ft **Land size:** 7,200 sq ft**Jack Wong** (REN 34442)IQI REALTY SDN BHD (E (I) 1584)
☎ +6016 905 9066**RM738,000****Jaya One Residence, Petaling Jaya, Selangor****Type:** Condominium **Tenure:** Leasehold
Built-up: 1,051 sq ft **Bedroom:** 2 **Bathroom:** 2**Joanne Than** (REN 06279)HARTAMAS REAL ESTATE (MALAYSIA) SDN BHD
(E (I) 1439) ☎ +6016 626 8226**RM550,000****Taman Nusa Bayu, Nusajaya, Johor****Type:** Terraced house **Tenure:** Freehold
Land size: 1,400 sq ft **Bedroom:** 4
Bathroom: 3**Jackson Sim** (REN 39940)THE ROOF REALTY SDN BHD (E (I) 1605/3)
☎ +6011 2800 0000**RM2,200,000****Taman Connaught, Cheras, Kuala Lumpur****Type:** Bungalow **Tenure:** Leasehold
Built-up: 3,000 sq ft **Land size:** 8,160 sq ft
Bedroom: 4 **Bathroom:** 3**James Lee** (PEA2496)LEADERS REAL ESTATE (E (3) 1204)
☎ +6010 773 0073**RM6,200,000****U-Thant Residence, Taman U-Thant, Kuala Lumpur****Type:** Condominium **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 6,800 sq ft **Bedroom:** 6
Bathroom: 8**James LH Ong** (REN 03246)RVT REALTY (E (3) 1170)
☎ +6014 206 9118

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RM240,000
Johor Bahru, Johor
Type: Condominium **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 226 sq ft **Bedroom:** 1 **Bathroom:** 1

Kamal Ag (E2838, PM2290)
AG REALTY (E (1) 1931)
+6012 305 1688



RM1,280,000
Sunway Geo Residences, Bandar Sunway, Selangor
Type: Condominium **Tenure:** Leasehold
Built-up: 1,388 sq ft **Bedroom:** 4 **Bathroom:** 3

Jane Lee (PEA2213)
GRIFFIN PROPERTIES (E (3) 1792)
+6017 668 2757



RM238,000
Bukit Beruntung, Rawang, Selangor
Type: Residential land **Tenure:** Freehold
Land size: 6,910 sq ft

Janice Tan (REN 01426)
VIVAHOMES REALTY SDN BHD (E (1) 1670/9)
+6017 555 9588



RM1,200,000
Kajang 2, Kajang, Selangor
Type: Semidee house **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 3,253 sq ft **Land size:** 3,253 sq ft
Bedroom: 4 **Bathroom:** 5

Jay Khor (REN 13282)
GREAT CASA REALTY SDN BHD (E (1) 1688)
+6016 660 8933



RM1,500,000
Seremban, Negeri Sembilan
Type: Agricultural land **Tenure:** Freehold
Land size: 4.85 acres

Jeevan (REN 07220)
CBD PROPERTIES (SEREMBAN) SDN BHD (E (1) 1197/9)
+6017 680 4417



RM2,888,000
Tanarimba, Janda Baik, Bentong, Pahang
Type: Bungalow **Tenure:** Leasehold
Built-up: 6,485 sq ft **Land size:** 44,793 sq ft
Bedroom: 3 **Bathroom:** 4

Jennifer Yap (REN 01757)
REAPFIELD PROPERTIES (HQ) SDN BHD (E (1) 0452)
+6012 324 0238



RM3,398,000
Harrington Suites, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah
Type: Condominium **Tenure:** Leasehold
Built-up: 2,860 sq ft **Bedroom:** 4
Bathroom: 5

Jenny Wong (REN 31278)
IQI REALTY SDN BHD (E (1) 1584/9)
+6019 881 3803



RM9,000/mth
11 Mont Kiara, Mont'Kiara, Kuala Lumpur
Type: Condominium **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 2,707 sq ft **Bedroom:** 3
Bathroom: 4

Jocelyn Shen Sze Ting (REN 18249)
CORNERSTONE XSTATE SDN BHD (E (1) 1851)
+6016 810 2083



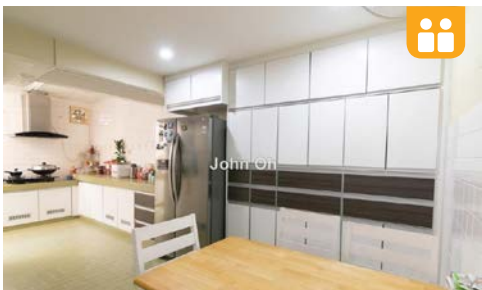
RM44,383,640
Kota Kinabalu, Sabah
Type: Commercial land **Tenure:** Leasehold
Land size: 158,515 sq ft

Jenny Wong (REN 31278)
IQI REALTY SDN BHD (E (1) 1584/9)
+6019 881 3803



RM3,700,000
Subang Heights, Subang Jaya, Selangor
Type: Bungalow **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 6,000 sq ft **Land size:** 5,400 sq ft
Bedroom: 7 **Bathroom:** 8

Joe Er (PEA 1736)
IQI REALTY SDN BHD (E (1) 1584)
+6012 383 8123



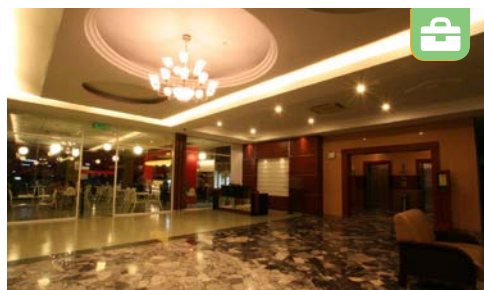
RM818,888
SS15, Subang Jaya, Selangor
Type: Terraced house **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 1,800 sq ft **Land size:** 1,650 sq ft
Bedroom: 4 **Bathroom:** 3

John Oh (REN 07002)
ORIENTAL REAL ESTATE SDN BHD (E (1) 1503)
+6012 298 6266



RM2,300/mth
Camellia Service Suites, Bangsar South, Kuala Lumpur
Type: Condominium **Tenure:** Leasehold
Built-up: 700 sq ft **Bedroom:** 1 **Bathroom:** 1

Jerry Lee (REN 08795)
OSE REALTY (E (3) 1871)
+6016 778 4258



RM31,000,000
Taman Sri Tanjung, Muar, Johor
Type: Hotel **Tenure:** Leasehold
Built-up: 38,266 sq ft

Jesena Tan (REN 36245)
GATHER PROPERTIES SDN BHD (E (1) 1536/2)
+6016 725 7231



RM979,000
Admiral Park @ Bandar Sungai Long, Selangor
Type: Semidee house **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 3,300 sq ft **Land size:** 3,440 sq ft
Bedroom: 5 **Bathroom:** 5

Jessica Tung (REN 05827)
PROPnex REALTY SDN BHD (E (1) 1800)
+6012 381 7783



RM1,300,000
Megan Avenue 1, KLCC, Kuala Lumpur
Type: Office **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 2,228 sq ft **Land size:** 2,228 sq ft
Bathroom: 2

Jimmy Ng (REN 02015)
REAPFIELD PROPERTIES (HQ) SDN BHD (E (1) 0452/1)
+6016 257 0886



RM6,800,000
Taman Bukit Impiana, Country Heights, Kajang, Selangor
Type: Bungalow **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 19,100 sq ft **Land size:** 25,714 sq ft
Bedroom: 10 **Bathroom:** 10

Joanne Ong (REN 26519)
VIVAHOMES REALTY SDN BHD (E (1) 1670/8)
+6010 239 7887

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