

# More launches in 2020

The outlook for the property sector looks brighter this year as developers are planning for more launches with a greater number of units to be released into the market.

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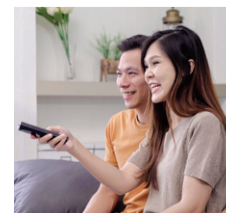
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**WIN KAW KAW - PRIZES GALORE AT STARPROPERTY FAIRS IN 2020**

StarProperty Fairs have become renowned for its exclusive rewards and prizes given in addition to the attractive offers by the exhibitors. As part of the 'Beli & Menang' contest held last year, 11 home buyers who purchased a home at 2019 StarProperty Fairs were rewarded with prizes and the Grand Prize winner drove home a brand new Proton X70.

For 2020, the total prize values have doubled with a cumulative RM 250,000 worth of prizes to be given away and the chances of winning a prize have tripled with three contests running concurrently under the 'Win Kaw Kaw' campaign. Visitors to the fair and those who place a booking at the fair stand to win along with home buyers under the Visit & Win, Book & Win and Buy & Win contests respectively. All contests are subject to the Terms & Conditions available on the StarProperty Fair website. The contests kick-off at the

inaugural StarProperty Fair for the year at The Starling Mall, on the 13th to 16th of February. Contest duration for all three contests run from 13th February until 31st December 2020, with winners to be announced in the first quarter of next year.

Besides these contests, individual fairs may have their own activities that further serve to encourage visitors. For example, the Starling Mall StarProperty Fair also has a Valentine's Share The Love Contests where couples stand to win romantic prizes for taking a selfie together at the fair. The emphasis on rewards at the property fairs is underpinned by a key finding - Malaysians surveyed in StarProperty's Buyer Sentiment Survey (BSS) feel the right time to buy a home is now.

And with prizes galore at the fairs, it is evident that the best time and place to purchase a property is at the 2020 StarProperty Fairs thanks to the added value. Fortune favours the bold so head on down to the upcoming Starling Mall StarProperty Fair and keep abreast with the activities or offerings of each StarProperty Fair by following us on social media or subscribing to our newsletter.



**VISIT & WIN**

Ever won a prize for just showing up? Well, now you can! Visit any StarProperty Fair in 2020 and fill in the Visitor Registration Form for the chance to win a paid holiday and other exciting prizes. 3 lucky winners stand to win a trip to Jeju, Perth and Bali respectively while other finalists will be rewarded with attractive home appliances as consolation prizes.



**BOOK & WIN**

The Book & Win contest aims to reward those who make bookings at StarProperty Fairs. Book any property at the fair and stand to grab a share of shopping vouchers and prizes totalling RM 100,000 for the year.



**BUY & WIN**

More than RM 100,000 worth of interesting prizes and holiday trips will also be given away to lucky home buyers who successfully complete the purchase of a property at any StarProperty Fair. Find out more at <https://fair.starproperty.my/>.

Organized by Media Partner

**REGISTRATION FEES**

REHDA Member **RM488.00** Non Member **RM588.00**

## STRATA DEVELOPMENT & DISPUTE RESOLUTIONS

Fostering Harmonious Communal Living in 2020

27<sup>th</sup> February 2020 | 9.00 am - 5.00 pm | Wisma REHDA

**Highly Distinguished Speakers:**

Datuk Charlie Chia Lui Meng  
Group Director  
UM Land Berhad

Mr. Lai Chee Hoe  
Founding Partner  
Chee Hoe & Associates

Tn. Roshan Kshatriya  
Head of Claims & Legal Division  
Section TPPS

Mr. Ngian Siew Siang  
Editor  
Strata Management Handbook

**Event Highlights**

- ▶ Strata Titles (Amendment) Act 2013 - Common issues faced by developers and PTG on the issuance of Strata Titles and other pertinent matters
- ▶ Strata Management Act 2013 (Act 757) & Strata Management (Maintenance and Management) Regulations 2015 - Pending issues in the implementation of SMA 2013 & Regulations 2015 and how these issues will affect the rest of 2020 and beyond?
- ▶ Subsidiary Management Corporations (Sub-MCs) - Complications and issues in setting up Sub-MCs and at which stage is the formation of a Sub-MC necessary?
- ▶ Developer's key responsibilities from the handing over of Vacant Possession (VP) period until the successful establishment of the Management Corporation (MC) - The roles and jurisdiction of the Strata Management Tribunal and how can developers appeal against the Tribunal's award?
- ▶ Understanding the common and alternative dispute resolution methods in strata living

Upcoming REHDA Institute Events	
20 Feb 2020	Updates on Extension of Time (EOT) & Housing Laws
11 March 2020	Updates on Property Development Guidelines
19 March 2020	Corruption Risk Management (CRM) For Property Developers
31 March 2020	IBS & IOT in Construction
16 April 2020	APDL + SPA Procedures
6 May 2020	NAPIC: Sales & Marketing Conference - Property Outlook (2nd half of 2019)
23 June 2020	Land Joint Venture & Land Issues
16 July 2020	Green Build Conference 2020
*August 2020	Strata Planning & Management: JB?Penang)
*September 2020	CEO Series cum Annual Property Developer Conference
*October 2020	Housing Conference 3.0
*Nov 2020	Economic Forward Outlook + Budget Commentary 2020

Notes: The Organizer reserves the right to alter the content and the timing of the programme in the best interest of the event

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## LOOKING FOR A HOME?

**STARLING MALL**  
Ground Floor

**13-16 FEB 2020**  
10 AM - 10 PM

**It's happening at The Starling!**

The first StarProperty fair for the year 2020 is ready to kick off at the Starling Mall, and there are many free prizes for grabs. Be spoiled for choices at the fair, with such fine selection of properties on display by prominent developers.

February is also a time for love, and couples who come along get to enjoy romantic prizes. Simply bring your significant other to the fair, snap a selfie together and share it on Instagram or Facebook. You may stand to win a one night stay in Red by Sirocco hotel, free movie tickets or spend quality time by attending a couple's baking class by the Malaysian Institute for Baking. See you next Thursday! 🏠

**Fun and fairs Curve-ing over to next month**

Can't make it for the StarProperty.my fair in The Starling? No worries. Next month's fair at The Curve, Petaling Jaya will be equally happening and festive. Bring your family and friends down to enjoy three days of fun-filled activities, starting from 26 to 29 Mar.

With the Wishing Box Contest, all you have to do is answer a simple question in the participation form, place it inside

the wishing box and stand to win exciting prizes. It's that easy! Or get your kids busy with our Fun Paper Crafts Workshop, where creative ideas take flight. Also, enjoy the complimentary kacang puthi treat, reserved only from Thursday to Sunday. Mark your calendar, so you don't miss out on the fun. 🏠

You're Invited

AN OUTLOOK FOR **2020**

AND MASTERY OF THE TOOLS OF SUCCESS

Guest Speaker: Prof. Joe Choo, Five Elements Mastery

Who should attend?  
**Real Estate Negotiators & Agents**

📅 12 FEB 2020

🕒 10 AM - 12 PM

📍 UPGEN, ETIQA, LOT 422, JALAN BANGSAR

**FFF: Feng Shui, free training and free prizes**

Come join our first-ever StarProperty Academy session, and be enriched by the world of Feng Shui, best explained by Malaysian Institute of Geomancy Sciences president Prof Joe Choo.

All real estate agents and negotiators are invited to discover the wonders of Feng Shui, with topics touching from the macro analysis of prospective sales, down to the focused theme of personal luck. Win prizes just by participating and grab the opportunity to have a private session with Choo, who will furnish you with minute details on your fortune. 🏠



By **JOSEPH WONG**  
josephwong@thestar.com.my

**A**FTER last year's slight improvement in the property market, developers appear to be keener in launching more units in 2020.

Observers who are keeping tabs with the more prominent property developers are noticing that while many remain cautious, more units are being launched this year.

For example, township developer LBS Bina Group Bhd (LBS), in announcing its 2020 sales target of RM1.6bil, is planning to launch 5,496 units of homes this year.

Eleven new launches, which has an estimated gross development value (GDV) of RM2.32bil, will be built in seven locations. The projects which will be concentrated in the central region are predominantly new phases of on-going developments including KITA @ Cybersouth township, LBS Alam Perdana township and Midhills 2.

The other projects to be unveiled in 2020 included single-storey link houses in Bandar Putera Indah in Batu Pahat; semi-detached units and double-storey terrace houses in Cameron Golden Hills in Cameron Highlands; and affordable single-storey houses in Chemor, Perak.

A total of 53% of the total launches will be priced below RM500,000, said LBS group managing director Tan Sri Lim Hock San when announcing the launches last month.

He said the new launches would support the increased sales target, which he believed is achievable as LBS exceed their 2019 sales target of RM1.5bil, hitting RM 1.63bil compared to RM1.53bil in 2018.

This is in spite of the challenging market conditions caused by softening consumer sentiments and global trade tensions, Lim said.

"LBS has continued to focus on quality townships and affordable developments in strategic locations, a segment that remains relatively strong in subdued market sentiment. This focused approach has proven effective, as reflected in LBS' financial performance.

"LBS is sustaining well amidst a challenging economic and property market environment. We managed to secure a CAGR (compound annual growth rate) of 20.37% for the past five successive years as a result of our 'people-focused' approach and wider adoption of Industrialised Building System (IBS) and design optimisation," Lim explained.

Similarly, another prominent developer, Sunway Property, is also launching more properties this year albeit a chunk of the launches are in Singapore.

But Sunway Property's Singapore launches are crucial components in the developer's goal of achieving its RM2bil sales target for 2020 while other overseas ventures will drive the developer forward.

Buoyed by its success in surpassing 2019's sales targets of RM1.3bil to reach RM1.55bil in sales, Sunway Property is launching close to RM3.5bil worth of

properties in gross development value (GDV).

In announcing this, Sunway Bhd property division managing director Sarena Cheah said this move was in line with its plans for geographical diversification.

She added that while Sunway has already expanded overseas, it had not fully tapped into this segment of their extensive portfolio.

"Sunway's recurring income from our portfolio of invested properties currently strengthens our financial sustainability. Geographical diversification will further deepen sustainability for us," she said.

"In line with our Master Community Developer brand promise, powered by our build-own-operate model, we will continue to invest in our integrated townships and developments to ensure growth for our communities with about RM 1.1 billion of investment properties currently being built".

## Local launches

Launches planned for Malaysia include Sunway Avila Retail which has a GDV of RM31mil, Sunway Velocity 2 Tower C (RM300mil), Sunway Belfield Tower A (RM360mil).

In Penang, the developer will kick-off its much-awaited RM2.4bil integrated development Sunway Valley City which is expected to replicate its successful Sunway Velocity development in Klang Valley.

The 25-acre development is located in Paya Terubong, Ayer Itam, one of the matured neighbourhoods in Penang.

In Johor, the developer will be launching Sunway Maple which has a GDV of RM100mil in Sunway Iskandar, while the RM167mil 288-room Sunway Big Box Hotel in Sunway Iskandar will be completed this year.

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LBS continues to focus on quality townships and affordable developments in strategic locations, said Lim



Cheah said delivering lifelong value for purchasers continues to be Sunway Property's key focus.



The outlook for the property market remains as muted as 2019, said Kong.

**M**ANGROVE conservation was the mandate of Country Garden Malaysia, the subsidiary of Hong Kong-listed Country Garden Holdings Co Ltd, during the development of its Forest City Phoenix International Golf Hotel and three golf courses.

The mangrove forest, surrounding the 36-hole golf courses in Gelang Patah, Johor designed by renowned Jack Nicklaus and Liang Guokun, was given priority to ensure its sustainability.

The golf courses are Legacy and Classic Golf Course spanning 183 and 172 acres respectively, with a third yet-to-be-named golf course in the works.

Once completed, the RM1.8bil posh and exquisite Forest City Phoenix International Golf Hotel and the Forest City Golf Resort will have 72 holes, sprawling over a 2,000-acre site.

The development also includes over 500 luxurious villas featuring modern European designs.

Despite the rapid construction, the developer of this mega project is putting greater efforts to ensure environmental sustainability and consistency aligned with the development.

"It is really a challenge for us to have a world-class golf course built near a natural water feature surrounded by mangroves. In addition to conserving the existing mangroves and ensuring that they are not affected during the construction process, we also face the challenge of illegal logging," said senior landscape officer Muhammad Syafiq Abdullah.

### Protect and conserve

He said the landscape unit had to work closely with the project, property management and auxiliary police in ensuring the mangrove areas surrounding the project were protected and conserved during the construction period.

The 28-year-old who originated from Sungai Petani, Kedah, graduated with Bachelor in Marine Science from Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) in 2013.

"Prior to joining the company, I was the research assistant at the university from 2013 until 2017, specialising in mangrove studies," said Syafiq.

He attributed his time working with UMT as valuable due to his experience in mangrove conservation. This was relevant and helpful when he joined Forest City in July 2017.

Syafiq oversees a team of 30 staff in the company's landscape unit involving conservation activities, monitoring the coastline with mangroves, collecting seeds and germinating them in the nursery.

"We have come out with a win-win situation, building the world-class golf courses and at the same time ensuring the mangroves will continue to thrive in their natural surroundings," said Syafiq.

He added that unlike trees, mangroves could not be uprooted and replanted elsewhere as their chances of survival were low and would eventually die.

"It is better to leave them in their natural surroundings or habitat, and these sturdy plants could survive up to 60 years," said Syafiq.

### 40 species

He said there were about 40 mangrove species in Malaysia. Among the species found along Johor coastline are rhizophora apiculata, rhizophora mucronata, bruguiera cylindrica, sonneratia caseolaris and avicennia sp.

"It is important to protect mangroves as they are a good indicator to determine healthy water conditions," said Syafiq.

He added mangroves acted as a filter to



Prof. Dr. Japar Sidek brief FC volunteers prior seagrass transplant activity.

# Country Garden gives priority to mangrove conservation

Greater efforts to ensure environmental sustainability and consistency aligned with the Forest City development

prevent sediments from flowing into the sea and a buffer zone to prevent coastal erosion.

He said mangroves are also the breeding grounds for mud crabs, mudskippers, mud creepers and migratory birds such as egrets and the milky stork.

"Monkeys also come to mangrove areas for food, and it is important to maintain the ecosystem for the primates and other creatures," said Syafiq.

Apart from mangroves, Forest City took into account the existence of seagrass during land reclamation activities for the multi-billion ringgit Forest City project.

Syafiq pointed out, unlike mangroves, seagrass could be replanted once the land reclamation was completed and would be able to adapt to the new environment.

"We are happy to note the seagrass is doing well and it shows that the water quality is good," he said.

Syafiq said the seagrass had become a sanctuary for small marine creatures such as seahorses, clown fishes, starfish, clams and pen shells.

He said locals were also happy as they were able to harvest clams and pen shells for their own consumption.

"However, they should not be overharvested to ensure their sustainability," said Syafiq, adding that engaging and educating the locals on mangrove and conservation project was vital.

He said feedback from locals revealed that they came across dugongs feeding on the seagrass during high tide and this was an indicator that the seagrass protection was a success.

Syafiq said Forest City worked closely with Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) on seagrass conservation focusing on monitoring and consulting activities since 2015.

Various efforts have been made by Forest

City to ensure that the seaweed around Forest City is protected. Based on UPM's observation, control measures were implemented, including double-layer silt screen installation, water quality monitoring, seaweed meadow population size, and transplanting efforts.

Other than conservation, Forest City intended to educate the community on Forest City's ecosystem and nature by sharing the knowledge through the establishment of an eco-museum.

The first phase of the museum will be completed by March 2020. Covering 110 sq metres, it will house two exhibition halls.

Through it, visitors can learn more on Malaysia's precious nature, as well as flora and fauna within Forest City and its ecosystem.

"Forest City can be a good example where nature and development could go side-by-side to ensure the environment is well protected for the future generation," he said.



Representatives from Malaysian Nature Society together with Forest City seal the deal on nature protection by signing a memorandum of understanding.



Mangrove saplings were planted in the Forest City nursery to be transplanted later.



Syafiq collecting mangrove saplings.



Mangroves store up to four times more carbon, said Chow.

## More than meets the eye to mangrove forests

The common notion that mangroves forests are muddy, boring and dangerous places cannot be further from the truth. Moreover, these ecosystems are far more critical than previously thought.

"By looking deeper into the mangrove systems, we may understand better why they have to be conserved," said Malaysian Nature Society (MNS) vice president Vincent Chow.

From stabilising shorelines to helping the fight against global warming by removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, mangrove forests provide a habitat for thousands of species of marine life as well as animals from migratory birds to monkeys, he revealed.

"Researchers have reported that per hectare, mangroves store up to four times more carbon than other tropical rainforests," he said. In addition, mangrove forests are part of the cycle of life as they provide shelter and food to populations of fishes that support the livelihood of communities of coastal fishermen.

Currently, the fishermen of Muar, Pontian and Batu Pahat are lamenting that the Straits of Malacca are depleted, and they are beginning to see poor returns from fishing. "Mangroves represent less than 0.4% of the world's forest, but they're disappearing three to five times faster than forests as a whole," he said.

"It is apparent that as long as the loss of the coastal mangrove forests goes unchecked, we will lose more than just the natural buffer strip against strong winds and high waves," he said.

If reclamation were well-planned with sufficient care and study of the sensitive habitats within, much of nature and its services could be retained, said Chow.

### Eco-friendly and greener

With this in mind, development plans must incorporate mangroves into the design, making them more eco-friendly and greener.

When mangrove forests are exploited for use, an integral part of this unique habitat and its related ecosystem are destroyed during land clearing.

Consultants must have drawn up the necessary mitigation measures for such projects but the state executive councillor for environment should be aware and give feedback to the public rather than firefighting when problems arise, he suggested.

Iskandar Regional Development Authority, which has conducted several in-depth studies over the years, may need to relook at problems faced by the coastal habitats before they are forever lost, he advised.

"There must be an updating of the state of the mangrove buffer strips along our state's long shoreline. These sensitive areas must be protected legally, and all encroachment must be acted upon legally.

"It should take the initiative to form and finance a Coastal Protection Action Committee to engage all stakeholders to forestall further losses of coastal mangrove forests either to erosion or human encroachment," he said.

Although replanting mangroves is a popular programme, much more could be done for the educational and information aspects. This is where the corporate sector can come in, to include this as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities, he said.

"One of the best ways is to set up a Marine Centre in Johor to avail to visitors printed references, preserved specimens, pictorial and digital presentations as well as on-hands learning experiences of the mangroves and its associated habitats (seagrass and mudflat) by using all our five senses," said Chow.

As a CSR project, Forest City is setting up such a centre, and MNS has been invited to be its partner. In due time, this centre could be where people learn about mangroves, as well as all their extensive and marvellous wonders and secrets. 🌿



The seagrass meadow opposite FC International Phoenix Marina Hotel is visible at low tide.

# Defining modern living

A choice between ethics, conveniences, minimalism and smart automation

By VIKTOR CHONG  
viktorchong@thestar.com.my

**M**ODERN living is a loose term since every individual has a personal interpretation and expectation of this concept. For some, the trappings of a bustling metropolis are attractive, with all amenities and facilities within arms reach or walking distance.

Then there are the city-weary folks who wish for a home enclosed in nature but not isolated from conveniences. Others want a house that connects directly to transit stations, while some embrace automation such as smart houses as the way forward.

For Esprit Estate Agent Sdn Bhd probationary estate agent Bavanie Suppiah, the advancement of



Bavanie believes human progress should complement nature, not go against it.

civilisation should be supported by the underlying need for conservation. She said that the power of the internet has made people more aware of environmental and health issues, and individuals nowadays like planting their own herbs and vegetables.

## Towards a greener future

Bavanie believes self-sustainable features should be incorporated in life, such as vertical planting areas, a community garden with compost pits, and the presence of recycling bins in the house and community.

Technologically, rainwater harvesting system, biometric door lock, solar-powered heater and community apps are some of the conveniences to modernise a development.

Regarding interior design, she suggested that it should complement the lifestyle of the busy city people.

"As life is so hectic outside, people prefer to have it simple, useful and easy on the inside," she advised. The design should be uncomplicated, with less messy furnishings, huge glasses for natural lighting and eco-friendly components.

When asked about her home, Bavanie said she lives in a 40-year-old single-storey semi-detached unit, whose backyard connects to a Chinese cemetery. She tries to incorporate modern style into the home by building an exposed brick wall between the backyard and the

house. Also, the family had built a wooden awning from used timber and roof tiles.

## Location, location, location

A house buyer by the name of Lai Soo Ching, 29, placed much emphasis on the availability of nearby amenities as a requirement for modern living. "It is a place surrounded by all your basic needs such as grocery shops, school, restaurant, clinic or hospital," he said.



Access to life's conveniences is top on Lai's priority.

Nick Wong Tien Roong, 30, is content with the basic requirements, saying that a modern development should have a gym, pool, 24-hour laundromat and a minimum of one outdoor sports facility. Just like Lai, he finds it important to be able to access public transportation and malls without much travelling.



Chan favours interior design and furniture with space-saving features.

"In my own definition, modern living is a lifestyle that is focused on the concept of minimalism," said 29-year-old John Mark Chan Kian Lim. He finds a smart home ecosystem appealing and favours interior design and furniture with space-saving features.

With Vivahomes Realty Sdn Bhd senior negotiator Jaleela Banu, modernisation should enhance and ease one's personal lifestyle. "For example, tiny houses have become more than just a trend overseas, but it is now a modern choice that allows owners to be debt-free," she observed.

Jaleela who lived in a double-storey terrace house at Kota Kemuning, Shah Alam described the township as one filled with many amenities and conveniences. However, traffic jams during peak periods can be quite a hassle. Although, she has little to complain about her house, which comes with air conditioning, central water heating system, kitchen and hob.



Jaleela said tiny houses have become a trend overseas.

"It is conducive enough to be considered as modern living for me. I am glad and ever grateful that I do not have to gather wood in my backyard to start my cooking," she said.

Back to the topic of modern living, Jaleela commented that it is essential to provide living comfort, security, good medical care and easy access to local infrastructures.

"The construction of caring-convenient facilities serves this new future market that is enticing to both investors and homeowners," she explained, noting that clubhouse facilities seemed to have become a contemporary development culture in the market.





## Modern homes will be smarter

There are also developers like IJM Land Bhd who are out to reshape the contemporary concept of living.

"We considered many aspects to make our designs stand out and at the same time be practical," said IJM Land senior general manager Datuk Hoo Kim See.

These aspects include colours, creative design, space utilisation and placement of furniture.

The smart home system feature includes synchronisation of remote control for house lighting, air conditioning and door sensors. Moreover, every unit of its latest development Rimbun Impian is installed with a digital door lock which allows access in and out of the home using either card keys, mechanical keys

or PIN code, reducing the hassle of using keys.

Not unlike Hoo, KLCT International Realty Sdn Bhd director of sales (Northern Region) Dominic Ong pointed out technology as the central theme when modern living is concerned. This may involve state-of-the-art facilities, and not just the common mix of swimming pool, gym, and three-tier security.

"We are talking about smart home systems with the latest apps that can communicate with our handphone," said Ong.

He added that this application should allow users holistic control over the property without being physically present, such as temperature management, pre-heating from the water heater, activation of the coffee machine, and others.

Ideally, it resembles a home for the privileged, yet low profile with facilities and common areas that are simple, usable, notwithstanding affordable service charges. The exterior function may involve I pads or built-in apps in the phone, which supports user's interaction with security guards, the ability to view CCTV cameras or allow booking of facilities.

Putting tech aside, Ong also broached the importance of human elements, such as the organisation of community events or gatherings that involve sports. Such indoor and outdoor activities are crucial to cultivating a healthy and friendly neighbourhood to live in. 🏠



Depending on features, the latest smart home technology can notify owners via phone when an unauthorised entry occurs in the house, with the available option of calling in the authorities.



Ong pointed out that the organisation of community events and gatherings are equally important in modern living.



"I would say 2020 is a cautiously optimistic year for Sabah property outlook," he said.

"In Sarawak, there are indeed more developers making plans to have 2020 launches, but I would remain cautious insofar as using that as an indicator. A lot of these plans have been made prior to 2020, a couple of years in the making," said property investor Charles Liew.

"Therefore, the fact that 2020 appears to be a magic number, I believe would not sway the prudent investor to all of a sudden decide this is a year to buy anything against market trends," he said.

The year 2019 remained a soft year despite BNM's move to reduce interest rates as they sought to revive economic activities across all sectors, including the real estate industry, said Liew, who is also Shine Pharmacy Sdn Bhd founder and CEO.

### Wuhan dampener

"We need to understand that from an economic point of view, sentiments and expectations in the market are key drivers. Rosy expectations, therefore, would inevitably lead to more spending in the market, and spending in the market promotes a chain reaction that would spark industries like the housing industry to experience a better year than years gone by.

"One thing to note also is the unexpected impact of the Wuhan Virus, as fears spread across the globe. There have been murmurs in the real estate market from agents that inspections and appointments have been pushed back as a result of the uncertainties caused by the Wuhan Virus outbreak," he said.

Looking ahead, the property market likens to a high-strung horse waiting to be released. Towards the later part of 2019 and early months of 2020, an increase in activities was felt in the real estate market, with a lot of landed properties seemingly coming into the market.

But as this is just the start of the year, property stakeholders will have to see how 2020 progresses. 📈

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### Lifelong value

Cheah said that delivering lifelong value for purchasers continue to be Sunway Property's key focus for the Malaysian market.

"100% of our launches this year will be within integrated developments or are transit-linked, in-line with the continued resilient demand that we are seeing from purchasers for properties which are connected and offers great convenience. Our new land banking efforts will also be in tandem," she said.

"We will continue to deliver lifelong value to homebuyers by developing quality liveable urban homes which are connected, and strategically-located, and price the homes within the range of RM600,000 to RM800,000.

"Our commercial launches which constitute 30% of our total launches this year will be within integrated developments with an immediate catchment in populous areas to ensure the success of our business community," she added.

"With this, homebuyers can be assured of lifelong value, and attain ideal urban lifestyles where they can live, learn, work, stay and play in safe and secure havens while being future-proofed with the inherent potential capital appreciation of the properties," said Cheah.

But not everyone is as optimistic. Association of Valuers, Property Managers, Estate Agents and Property Consultants in the Private Sector, Malaysia (PEPS) president Michael Kong said: "The atmosphere is still cautious."

The outlook for the property market remains as muted as last year's and the status quo is unlikely to change, he said.

"I reckon the current situation will persist for another year or so," he said.

### Cautious optimism

In Sabah, 2019 was a relatively quiet year for properties in terms of launches as most developers held back and adopted a wait-and-see approach towards the market, said Propertyhub Sdn Bhd director and group chief strategist Enoch Khoo.

"However towards the end of 2019, the developers have been preparing for their launches in 2020," he said.

Some of the notable projects to be launched in Q1 2020 are The Logg and Likas Vue in Likas, 313 Suites in Penampang, as well as Vetro 11 and Sutera Bay in Kota Kinabalu.

The Logg by KTI Property Sdn Bhd will have 438 units, Likas Vue by Asian Pac Holdings Bhd (650 units), 313 Suites by BIH Group's subsidiary Alphabet

Properties Sdn Bhd (226 units), Vetro 11 by Q Avenue Sdn Bhd (260 units) and Sutera Bay by Singapore-listed property developer GSH Corporation (283 units).

"There is much optimism at the start of 2020 with the announcement from BNM (Bank Negara Malaysia) on its pre-emptive measure to secure improving growth trajectory by cutting OPR (overnight policy rate) to 2.75%.

"However this sentiment would probably be overshadowed by the recent Corona Virus outbreak which has caused many uncertainties on a global scale," Khoo said.

Sabah is very dependent on the tourism industry, which is expected to suffer a drop of arrivals for tourist, he explained, noting that properties relating to the tourism market may see a reduction.

Barring other unforeseen circumstances, the property outlook for Sabah should remain stable as the property market is not too dependent on foreign investors, he said.

ABOVE  
Aerial photo of Kota Kinabalu.

**"Homebuyers can be assured of lifelong value, and attain ideal urban lifestyles where they can live, learn, work, stay and play in safe and secure havens while being future-proofed with the inherent potential capital appreciation of the properties.**

- Cheah



Khoo said Sabah developers are preparing their launches for 2020



One thing to note is the unexpected impact of the Wuhan Virus, said Liew.



Photo of Kuching.