

Women powerhouses

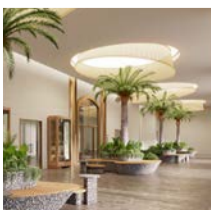
In an industry that is historically dominated by men, these successful women in real estate step up to the plate.

> See inside pages



From front left are Malaysian Institute of Estate Agents president Chan Ai Cheng, Tropicana Corporation Bhd (Tropicana) deputy chief executive officer (CEO) Joanne Lee, Mah Sing Group Bhd (Mah Sing) group strategy and operations director Jane Leong and Veritas Design Group vice president Lillian Tay. From back left are KIP REIT executive director Valerie Ong, iLP Realty chief executive officer Ivon Lai, Titijaya Land Bhd executive director Charmaine Lim Puay Fung and SDB managing director Teh Lip Kim.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE



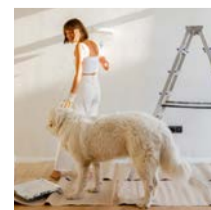
FEATURED DEVELOPMENT

Live well in exquisitely crafted space at Bon Kiara > 4



FEATURED DEVELOPMENT

Technology in vogue at the heart of Nada Embun > 8



SPECIAL FEATURE

All the single ladies > 10 & 11

Real estate's desert roses

Data paints few women in property industry in the last five years, and women are adapting in their stride.



Women make excellent property agents as they are deemed more trustworthy.

By YIP WAI FONG
waifong.yip@thestar.com.my

THE property industry is represented in Malaysia's Statistics Department (DOSM) as two separate sectors – construction and real estate services. Data from both shows a picture of a male-dominated industry. No surprise.

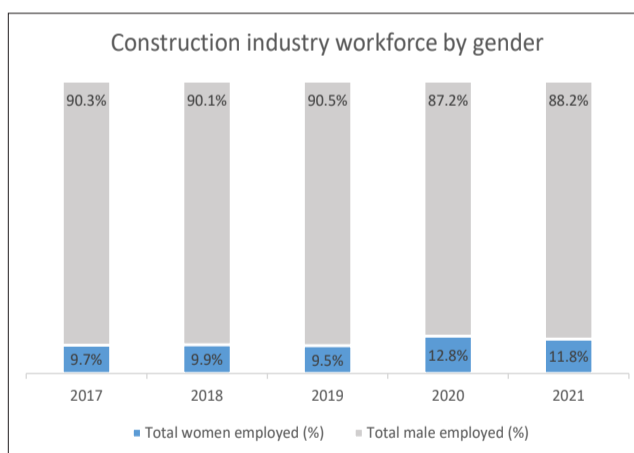
When the two are taken as a whole, women are being outnumbered by 6 to 1 in 2021. The good news is there has been more women in the industry since 2017 when the ratio was 8:1.

But of concern is, on the education side, the number of women enrolling in engineering and construction has declined since 2017. DOSM tabulated the enrolment in the fields of Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction at higher education institutions.

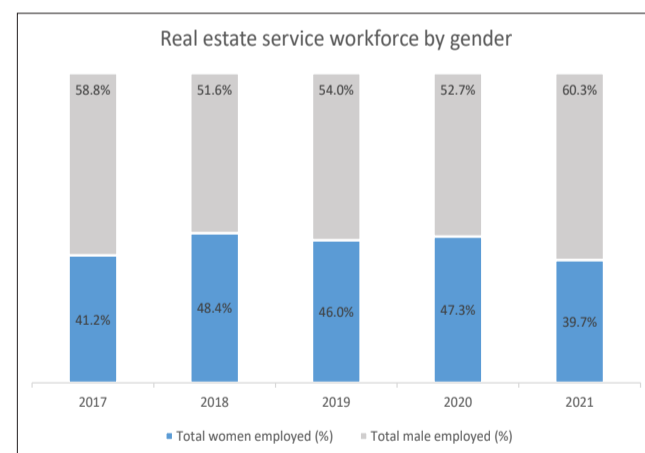
From 2017 to 2021, less than 200,000 women are employed in the construction sector, translating to less than 1% of the total national workforce.

The contrast is stark compared to men, where on average 89% of them are employed in the sector from 2017 to 2021.

According to DOSM, there are between 33,000 and 47,000 women active in real estate services from 2017 to 2021, or just



Source: DOSM



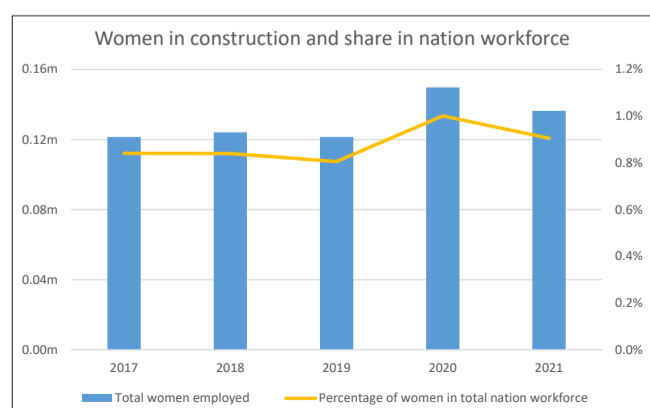
Source: DOSM

about 0.3% of the total workforce in the country. Women's participation has declined by 0.9% since 2017.

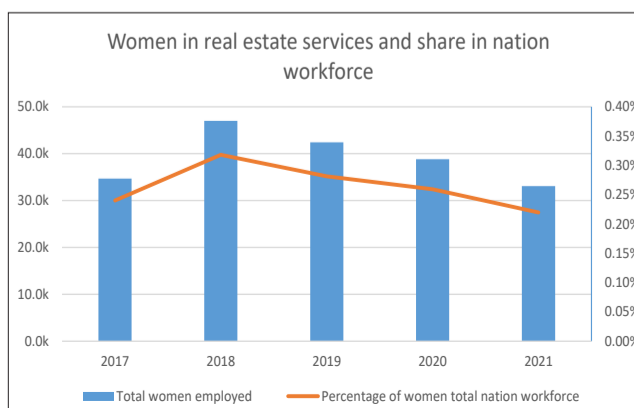
Gender parity is also pronounced in real estate services, where on average 44.5% of those employed are women from 2017 to 2021.

But even as the sector is more preferred by women due to its work hour flexibility (see Women's Say), men still make up the majority of the workforce.

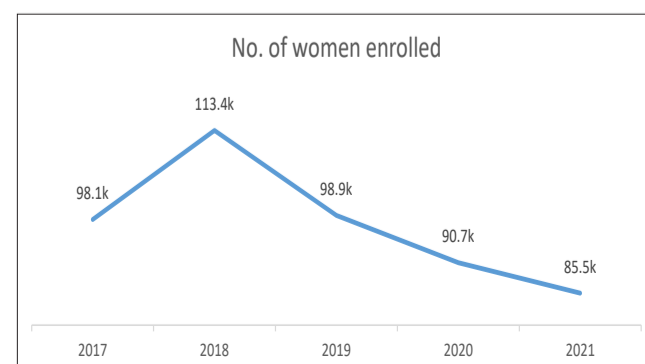
On average, 97,000 women enrolled for these fields from 2017 to 2021. However, enrolment has declined over the period at the rate of 2.7%. Declining enrolment also occurred for male students at a rate of 3.2%.



Source: DOSM



Source: DOSM



Source: DOSM



To spur the property sector, both market segments need to be looked into, said Chan.



A real estate negotiator has flexible working hours so it's beneficial to working mothers, said Lai.



The challenges go back to the traditional societal expectation of women, said Mardiana.

Women's say

When asked about how women thrive in an industry where they are the minority, they said that they adapted by embracing professionalism in their work.

Malaysian Institute of Estate Agents president Chan Ai Cheng said the most common misperception in her profession is that men were viewed as more competent when it comes to business dealings and are more able to close deals in commercial and industrial property segments, while women are better in the residential segment only.

"But at the end of the day, though stereotyping exists, it is easily overcome when one is knowledgeable, able to hold and carry themselves well and deliver the results," she said.

Real estate agency iLP Realty chief executive officer Ivon Lai said being passionate about the industry has kept her moving despite having to put in extra hard work to

prove herself and build her agency's reputation.

"I needed to put in double, triple or even more effort to prove myself through results. Apart from (delivering) results, (building) integrity and reputation is very important. My passion for the property industry has kept me moving. I constantly keep myself up-to-date about market trends and review my company's (strategic) position. I'm always thinking out of the box and going towards the blue ocean strategy to provide total solutions for our clients," she told StarProperty.

She also encourages women to join real estate businesses as it is advantageous to women in its own way.

Flexible working hours

"A real estate negotiator has flexible working hours so it's beneficial to a working mother. Besides a lucrative income, a healthy work-life balance is achievable. This industry (allows) for more exposure (to a variety of) people every day. For women (who are equipped with) property investment knowledge, joining this industry can help them become an investor-manager of their own properties in order to achieve financial freedom," she said.

Ai Cheng concurs that real estate is a suitable vocation for women, adding that female agents are viewed as more trustworthy by buyers and sellers as well as landlords and tenants.

"Generally women agents are more patient, show empathy and build rapport with clients. Real estate is

a very suitable business for women. The ability to set your own schedule is ideal for women who have other responsibilities at home such as taking care of children or ageing parents. As real estate is a people-centric business, women can put into good use their communication and relationship-building skills. The monetary rewards correlate to the effort," she said.

UEM Sunrise Bhd chief development officer Mardiana Rahayu said women are synonymous with the ability to multi-task, sensitivity to details, assertiveness and steadfastness. These are important qualities in the construction industry.

"Women are known to be assertive and no-nonsense in their views and opinions and tend to steer projects towards timeliness of delivery. Our inherent ability to juggle and manage priorities, and our resourcefulness are often needed to ensure cost is well within what has been allocated," she said.

She said the challenges go back to the traditional societal expectation of women to be a homemaker and child-rearing while men are expected to be the breadwinner.

"This is still the case in 2023 Malaysia for many of us," she said, adding that more women will be attracted to join the sector if the opportunity for advancement in terms of promotion and wage are improved for women.

"Statistics have shown that there is still a wage difference between men and women in the construction sector with men either earning more, getting promoted faster or simply given more opportunities to say, take on international roles that require frequent travelling," she pointed out.

Juggling at the top



In architecture, there is no difference between men and women, said Tay.

SOME jobs are not gender biased and are equally suitable for both men and women, based on their personal abilities, talents and skills. Occupations like architecture demand for both creativity and technical knowledge, and a methodological mindset, said Veritas Design Group vice president Lillian Tay.

From the design concept to resolving all the engineering, performance and regulatory compliances needed to construct a building, the architect's work needs to get down to a myriad of technical details covering multiple disciplines including engineering, landscape, interiors and cost

management.

Tay, who oversees design at Veritas and leads key projects in residential, hospitality and workplace architecture, transportation and urban design, said she sees that women and men are not different in terms of their abilities and perspectives.

"I believe there is no difference in the abilities and perspectives of men or women

when it comes to architecture design. Great design comes from a constant spirit of inquiry, an innovative mindset to solving problems, a passion for beauty and proportion of forms and very importantly, a good understanding and care for how people can use and enjoy space," she said, adding that the traditional norms for gender roles present more of a stumbling block for women rather than the profession itself.

Harsh reality

"In many societies, it is often less common for most women to go out extensively to network to secure projects. That may set them at a disadvantage compared to the boys' club when it comes to bringing in projects to grow their own practice. Getting the work is as critical as doing the work for any business, large or small.

"Also in many less developed or more traditional communities where families may have greater financial challenges, the harsh reality is that they are more likely to spend their limited funds on their sons rather than their daughters," she said.

She observed that although women studying architecture at universities are about equal to male, reflecting a healthy level of interest among women, not many of the graduates ended up in the profession. Her

observation is confirmed by the Malaysia Board of Architects (LAM), a statutory body that conducts the registration of architects, graduate architects and other related roles. A total of 5,854 professionals are registered with the boards as of February 2023.

According to LAM, while 41% of the registered graduate architects are women, women architects stand at just 25%. Tay suggests that to interest more women to join architecture, men should be incentivised to take up a share of responsibilities at home, besides more opportunities to work remotely for women.

"At universities, the ratio of males to females studying architecture is about equal. However, in the working world, the ratio of female to male architects is substantially lower, showing a high drop-out rate for women. It is hoped that today's IT amenities can help incentivise more women to stay on by allowing women more opportunities to work remotely from home," she said.

And instead of requiring more mandatory maternity leave for women which might work against them securing promotions or higher pay, it might be better to offer increased paternity leave for men to inspire them to take a larger role in parental responsibilities more equally at home, Tay said.

Live well in exquisitely crafted space at Bon Kiara

Aspiration that goes beyond the beauty of surroundings and convenience of location



INSPIRING a better quality of life is a central theme behind everything boutique developer BON Estates does, a sense of purpose that makes itself evident even in the company's tagline Living, Well-Crafted.

More than just a statement, the new-age developer takes a holistic approach to fulfil this objective by making it a vital consideration behind choices that define the concept, design and overall atmosphere of every development it executes.

For BON Estates, the aspiration to live well goes beyond the beauty of surroundings and convenience of location, it is also about how we interact and engage with these elements, and how spaces are specifically crafted to enrich and elevate the overall living experience. It is an opportunity to curate living habitats that add value to the health and well-being of residents.

Luxury high-rise

A good example of this philosophy brought to life is BON Estates' newest undertaking, Bon Kiara, a luxury high-rise that takes shape in the much sought-after cosmopolitan neighbourhood of Jalan 3, Mont' Kiara.

In addition to the enormous draw of the locale itself, which offers world-class facilities and amenities at your doorstep, Bon Kiara appeals with its promise of sanctuary. It is a calming Mediterranean-style escape, with lush surroundings and a collection of wellness-oriented leisure facilities that will resonate with those who seek respite from the hectic pace of modern urban life, without having to sacrifice the excitement, pulse and convenience of city living.

The verdant atmosphere at Bon

Kiara offers the perfect setting for residents to focus on mind, body and soul. Nature's influence is ever-present in spaces that have been meticulously designed to relax, rejuvenate and reactivate your senses.

At the heart of the development, a verdant central park encourages daily interaction with your outdoor environment. A communal place that fosters closer ties with members of your community, it promotes healthy lifestyle activities such as jogging or cycling. Being a pet-friendly address, the park is also a perfect place to enjoy an active lifestyle with your four-legged friends, where morning or evening strolls become a part of your everyday routine.

The open green also facilitates quality time with children in a health-centric and safe environment. Enjoy weekend picnics on the lawn with hours of fun with a frisbee or just kicking the ball around, while at the same time conditioning the next generation to embrace healthier pursuits in their leisure time.

There is also a picturesque tree walk area that inspires the whole family, young and old, to take evening strolls and enrich their wellness experience while at home.

Those who are more fitness-oriented will appreciate the lap-size swimming pool for vigorous workouts, while those simply seeking quiet time can rejuvenate at the dipping pool. There is also a clubhouse available on site, which provides a convenient space for workouts.

If a more Zen-like approach to exercise is your preference, then a wellness deck located on the 24th floor caters to various floor exercises, offering a panoramic view while you

break a sweat in calm surroundings.

Importantly, your health and wellness aspirations can also be achieved in the privacy of your home. With Sky Homes that start from 2,081sq ft to 3,075 sq ft, units at Bon Kiara are crafted with multi-functional use in mind, allowing numerous opportunities to shape spaces according to your personal lifestyle needs.

One such option is the large lanai space afforded at every unit, making it a perfect candidate to serve as a private health and wellness area. With floor space that is large enough to comfortably house a treadmill or a Pilates reformer machine, daily workouts here will be motivated by the breezy exterior environment and bird's eye view of the skyline.

Crafting spaces

With layout options that range between 3+1 bedrooms and 5+1 bedrooms, many other opportunities to craft spaces to your needs exist within Bon Kiara's spacious abodes. Designed to cater to multi-generational living, capacious interiors provide plenty of room to apply creative freedom for personal preferences.

Because your state of mind is also vital to your sense of wellness, living areas are luxuriously spacious, allowing individuals to enjoy the quiet comfort of vastness or sufficient room to host a sizeable party of guests whenever needed. With a separate wet and dry kitchen, neatly tucked away bedrooms with ensuite baths and practical floor layouts to work with, you truly get the experience of living in a landed home in the sky.

More peace of mind comes from knowing that your home is GreenRE

Gold certified, which means it adopts industry-leading energy efficiency, sustainability and environmentally-friendly standards. An EV charging isolator reserved for every unit at the car park also encourages you to make positive lifestyle choices about your preferred mode of transport.

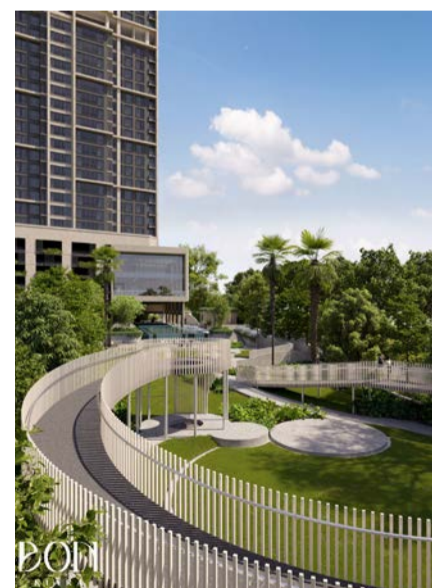
In fact, the overall quality of life at Bon Kiara nurtures better choices when it comes to your personal health and wellness. The surrounding Mont' Kiara neighbourhood provides an ideal ecosystem for this, with its safe street concept and large sidewalk areas that encourage pedestrian-friendly movement within the community.

It is not uncommon to see locals jogging or cycling to retail and grocery outlets, or simply opting to walk to one of the many dining destinations peppered throughout the neighbourhood's landscape. Similarly, it inspires you to adopt a healthier flavour to your daily routine, where enjoying the best of modern urban culture and pursuing a more wellness-centric approach to your lifestyle quality are no longer mutually exclusive goals.

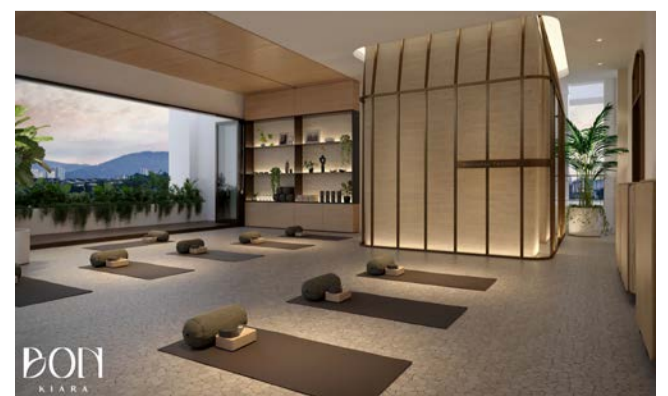
Bon Kiara is an address that offers myriad opportunities to enhance, enrich and enliven your aspiration to embrace a healthier, balanced and more meaningful quality of life. Best of all, it allows you to achieve it in a way that suits you best. For more information, visit BonKiara.com 🏡

(ABOVE)
 The lobby area is reflective of Bon Kiara's nature-inspired appearance.

(RIGHT)
 The curvaceous design of the park lined with trees enforces its zen-like attraction to encourage its regular usage.



(BELOW)
 The Wellness Deck offers a space for various floor exercise routines.



BON

K I A R A

LAUNCHING SOON

A GreenRE Gold certified sustainable development in the heart of Mont Kiara – **Bon Kiara** welcomes you to rich, effortless living. Find balance within open-plan homes with built-up space of 2,081 to 3,075 sq. ft., a family and pet friendly environment, and luxurious amenities by emerald green landscapes.

Glimpse your new home and haven now.

REGISTER your interest at
BonKiara.com



A Project By

B Ö N
E S T A T E S
LIVING. WELL-CRAFTED

BON ESTATES GALLERY
57, Jalan Penaga, Bangsar
59100 Kuala Lumpur
T. +603 2022 6566 W. BonEstates.com

Developer: Land Marker Sdn Bhd (700910-P) • Developer License No.: 30079/05-2027/0078(A) • Validity Period: 20/05/2022 - 19/05/2027 • Advertising Permit No.: 30079-1/02-2026/0158(N)-(S) • Validity Period: 21/02/2023 - 20/02/2026 • Land Marker Sdn Bhd, 57, Jalan Penaga, Taman Bandaraya, 59100 Kuala Lumpur, 03-22026566 • Freehold • Land Encumbrances: Maybank Islamic Berhad • Total: 410 units • Min 2 car parks each unit • Bon Kiara Condominium • Expected Date of Completion: March 2027 • Size: 2,081 sf - 6,226 sf • Selling Price: RM1,623,000 (Min) - RM5,029,000 (Max) • Type A - 64 units • Type B - 136 units • Type C - 68 units • Type D - 136 units • Type E - 1 units • Type F - 1 units • Type G - 1 units • Type H - 1 units • Type I - 1 units • Type J - 1 units • Approving Authority: Dewan Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur • Building Plan Approval No.: (16) d/m. BP T1 OSC 2021 1694 • Bumiputera Discount: 5%

Disclaimer: All illustration pictures and renderings are artists' impressions only, no representation or warranty is made as to the accuracy or completeness of the same. The Items are subject to variation, modification and substitutions as may be recommended by relevant authorities or consultants. Loose furniture and fittings are illustrations only, not part of the contract.

IKLAN INI TELAH DILULUSKAN OLEH JABATAN PERUMAHAN NEGARA

Leading ladies

Successful women in real estate industry share their experiences



Successful business woman on mountain top. Leadership and future concept. Abstract city background with sunlight and silhouette. Double exposure

By JOSEPH WONG josephwong@thestar.com.my

MEN may have historically dominated the real estate market but women are stepping up to the occasion and they might perhaps one day supersede their male counterparts if their trajectory continues skywards.

It is undeniable that throughout its inception, women have contributed to the real estate sector albeit in more administrative capacities. Since the early 1900s, an increasing number of women started to work as brokers and agents worldwide. While developed nations had an early start compared to the rest of the world, many developing countries did not lag too far. In Malaysia, the number of prominent women in the real estate industry has also grown tremendously.

Moreover, daughters of prominent property developers have entered the limelight, stepping out of their fathers' shadows. And many have risen to positions of leadership.

Among them are Mah Sing Group Bhd (Mah Sing) group strategy and operations director Jane Leong, KIP Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) executive director Valerie Ong, Selangor Dredging Bhd (SDB) managing director Teh Lip Kim and Titijaya Land Bhd executive director Charmaine Lim Puay Fung.

Tropicana Corporation Bhd (Tropicana) deputy chief executive officer (CEO) Joanne Lee was the exception of the five leaders interviewed by StarProperty, as her pathway took a different route.

Father's footsteps

"I've had strong interest in the industry since my childhood of visiting property galleries with my father. I thought that it was a normal family weekend bonding activity. Malaysia was experiencing a property boom in 2009/2010 where you can see a huge jump in the value of transactions - RM81 billion in 2009 vs RM107.44 billion in 2010.

"Mah Sing was also seeing tremendous growth with numerous new launches and land acquisitions, and it was a good time to join then as I could see through the whole development cycle of a project, and I've not looked back since," said Leong.

Similarly, Ong also tagged along with her father Datuk Eric Ong for property launches and mall visits to understand the intricacies behind the property business and in building a successful mall.

"I had a keen interest in our business and was fortunate enough to have various mentors to show me the ropes early on. I kickstarted my KIP career under our tourism arm, Summit Holiday, whereby I lead its digitalisation efforts. It is hard to believe this was almost 12 years ago," she said.

Ong became KIP Group chief executive officer in 2017 and in 2022, she also became the KIP REIT executive director of KIP REIT.

Titijaya Land's Lim also accompanied her father at a young age to various site visits and business meetings.

"My father did not intend to influence me to

take over his business one day by bringing me to all business events. It was merely a bonding time for both of us. But indirectly, this has sparked my ever-lasting passion for property development.

"In many ways, my father is a role model for me in this business, as his journey from humble beginnings has always inspired me to take on challenges. Because of my father, I had the privilege of learning about the nuances of the property sector. I also learnt about his perseverance and hard work along the way," she told StarProperty.

Taking the leadership role

For Teh, it was a trial by fire when she took over as SDB managing director in 1998, a period when the tin market had collapsed and it was no longer viable to continue mining. On top of that, it was the height of the 1997/1998 Asian Financial Crisis.

"I opted to do something else that will put the company back on the path to profitability. Back then, we were a diversified group. But eventually, we had most of the unprofitable businesses sold off and were left with the core businesses of property leasing, property management and the hotel. That enabled us to look for other areas in which to invest, leading us to property development.

"At that time, we already had Wisma Selangor Dredging, built in 1985. And I thought that it was only natural that we go into property development - because we already had the

experience. It was a bold decision made in a very challenging period, but it helped to transform SDB and propelled us to success for the long-term greater good of shareholders, stakeholders and employees," said Teh.

A different path

For Tropicana's Lee, she went on a different path. Lee, with over 30 years of professional experience across various industries linked to the property industry, worked her way up the corporate ladder.

In 2010, she joined Tropicana where she was entrusted to establish and strengthen the procurement and sourcing strategy for the group. After working 10 years in Tropicana, the group recognised her potential in driving the Sales and marketing division and she became the division's managing director. Her solid performance and approachable leadership style propelled her to her current position as deputy CEO.

On the male-female ratio in the property industry, Lee believed that there is a good gender balance nowadays. "For example, our project division, marketing and sales division and finance division have a good mix of males and females," she said.

Lim added: "When I started my first project 20 years ago, I was already working with female architects, female interior designers, and female contractors. We visited construction sites and had various meetings at the site. I have also seen some of them walking steadily

with high heels at the construction site. So, it is not uncommon for women to play important in this industry except at male-dominated construction sites.

"I am fortunate that I did not experience any significant prejudice being a woman in this industry. Today, I am working with many fantastic women in my industry and within my organisation. The gender gap has also narrowed over time."

This is not a male-dominated industry per se, but there are certain professions which have remained more male-dominated, for example, site project managers, interjected Leong.

"In many other roles and most certainly in leadership roles, it is still the right job fit trumping over gender. Tan Sri Leong is a strong proponent of the right person for the right job and this gender blindness and respect for both genders is reflected in the company.

"In Mah Sing, our head of legal, head of investor relations and corporate finance, head of people operations, head of business development, head of interior design and fit out, head of strategic communications, sustainability and corporate responsibility are all ladies, and it is not their gender but their capabilities which put them in these roles. On the board level, 43% of our directors are ladies. I do not deny that there are challenges but perhaps it is less apparent where we work," she said.

From a woman's perspective

At SDB, women make up 50% of its workforce, including those in senior management roles and on the Board.

"As a woman myself, I believe that women can bring diversity to the table, which is invaluable in any business. We have different life experiences, perspectives, and approaches to problem-solving as compared to our men counterparts, which can lead to new and innovative ideas. To add on, women's abilities to multitask can be beneficial and many of us are very detail-oriented and thorough in our work - especially when attention to detail is critical or is what sets us apart from our competitors," said Teh.

"We have implemented flexible working hours whereby the SDB team can avoid the evening rush hour and leave earlier before the traffic congestion starts. This enables our colleagues especially women to pick up the children and spend more quality time with their families at home.

"It is also important for women, not just in the property sector, but in whatever industry they may be in, to be able to handle and deal with pressure. Having the right mindset is important. With positive thoughts, you can remain calm and stay focused on what needs to be accomplished. For me, practising meditation three times daily has helped a lot as it allows me to detach from things that are negative. Through meditation, I learn to be grateful and appreciative of all the good things," she added.

Being a woman in a male-dominated industry has its challenges, said Ong, who had a different experience.

"The lack of representation and diversity often meant that I was the only woman in the room. This required me to be assertive and confident in my abilities to ensure that my ideas were heard and valued.

"Additionally, there were times when I felt like I had to work harder to prove myself and my capabilities, as the expectations of women in this industry can be sometimes higher than those for men. However, I have always been committed to working hard, continuously developing my skills and knowledge, and building relationships with my colleagues, which has helped me to establish myself as a respected and valued member of the team," she said.

On a brighter note, Ong believed that the challenges faced have made her a stronger and more resilient professional. This sentiment is clearly shared with the other women leaders.

Adversity strengthens a person, as the proverb goes. And it has not only made these great leaders stronger but also more resilient. They have acquired new knowledge and viewpoints over time, which has increased their appreciation for what they already have.

Advice they would have loved

If a time machine were to have been invented, these five property women would have greatly appreciated the following advice from themselves to their younger selves.



"I would have advised myself to find a good coach," said Leong.

Mah Sing Group Bhd group strategy and operations director Jane Leong is grateful to have met several good mentors in the office who guided and taught her the end-to-end process in the property development cycle as well as the people management side of the business.

"Looking back, I would have advised myself to find a good coach who could continuously build me to be a better version of myself as I believe this could have helped me reach my work and life goals. Sometimes, it takes a person from outside looking in to give fresh perspectives and share their life experiences," she said.

"I would not have wanted to do anything differently," said Ong.



KIP REIT executive director Valerie Ong does not want to change what she has done, pointing out that "life is a journey, not a destination" and this rings true in her life. "I would not have wanted to do anything differently. I would have told myself to embrace the journey as learning never stops," she said.



"I would advise my younger self to focus on learning," said Teh.

"Essentially, it is about choices made along the way. I would advise my younger self to focus on learning and be open to new opportunities. It is important to stay up to date with the latest technology and trends. Be open and

not be afraid to try out new things, even if it is beyond your comfort zone - be a trailblazer," said Selangor Dredging Bhd managing director Teh Lip Kim.

She said: "It is also important to be confident in your own abilities yet at the same time be able to embrace failure. Failure will always be part of the learning process and it is very important to not let it discourage you. Take for example the recent pandemic and how it has impacted and disrupted our lives in unprecedented ways. Many people lost their jobs and businesses. We never saw it coming but as we are now healing from it, we take this as an opportunity to learn and grow.

"Last but not least, I would advise myself to prioritise work-life balance. Even if the work is demanding, it is important to prioritise your physical and mental health.

Nothing is more important than your own well-being."



Lim would tell her younger self not to be constrained by physical differences.

For Titijaya Land Bhd executive director Charmaine Lim Puay Fung, she wishes to tell her younger self to be present more at construction sites and not be constrained by

physical differences, even with all the surrounding male construction workers at the sites.

Lee would advise her younger self to buy more quality landbank.



As for Tropicana Corporation Bhd deputy chief executive officer Joanne Lee, she said: "On the business front, I will review our landbank acquisitions with our team and buy more quality landbank across

Malaysia. We will also roll out more sustainable townships anchored by our Tropicana unique development DNA while staying committed to our ESG pillars. We will also continue to improve our group's strategy and business model, capitalising on local and global market trends." 📈



Nada Embun offers technology and tranquility in Seremban 2 South

Enjoy a serene and minimalistic lifestyle within reach of Seremban city centre

WITH the socio-economic upheaval of recent years, many homebuyers are forgoing a crowded city life to enter an era of serene living. Whether in small doses of nature-based facilities or sprawling parks and sustainable design, the public and property developers alike see eye-to-eye on improvements made to the modern home.

Property developer Seri Pajam Development combines these desires with minimalism's clean lines and simple aesthetic in its new development – Nada Embun. Located south of Seremban 2, the first phase of Nada Embun comprises single-storey terrace and double-storey terrace residential units with freehold titles.

The development encompasses 201 acres and has recently launched 271 units in its first phase. These homes have a built-up area of 1119 to 1199 sq ft and are priced from RM440,000 to RM756,950. Nada Embun is designed with mindfulness of space, as well as the sleek practicality necessary in contemporary lifestyle.

Following its philosophy of minimalist living, Nada Embun homes offer residents a lifestyle centred on the relationship between nature and self, a space where they can focus on what truly matters.

Experience Seri Pajam Development's exceptional craftsmanship with Nada Embun, which prioritises a stylish build-up without awkward shapes and corners.

With three bedrooms and two bathrooms layouts, the units make full use of windows to allow for natural ventilation and sunlight. These are modest and unobtrusive features that enhance air flow and energy through the home without electrical energy consumption. The units also follow an open-concept design that encourages flexible adjustment of living spaces, with elegant high ceilings and well-planned floor layouts. The kitchen and bathrooms have completed wall tiles, allowing for a more cost-effective space.

Homes have fully covered porches that are sized to accommodate two cars, as well as an extended backyard, which will allow families their own outdoor space for activities, whether for recreational fun or a breath of fresh air.

In line with its goal of creating a practical and functional environment, Nada Embun applies smart technology to emphasise the comfort of its residents. From smart light switches to keyless access, residents will find themselves delighted by the futuristic progress of today's technology with the option of owning not just a home, but a smart home. With an intelligent welcome device, home owners will be able to control appliances such as televisions, air conditioners and washing machines from a singular device.



Artist's Impression

(ABOVE)

Nada Embun homes offer residents a lifestyle centred on the relationship between nature and self.



(These open areas were specially designed as gathering spaces, revitalising human connection.



Seri Pajam Development goes beyond providing people with their dream homes.

Practical and sustainable

In line with its key focus on the urgent concerns of environmentalism and sustainability, Seri Pajam Development welcomes the opportunity to make a change. It should come as no surprise that Nada Embun has further equipped its new project with sustainability features, such as waste sorting, rainwater harvesting on the gazebo, solar garden lights and natural landscaping.

These design elements create a self-sustainable development, reducing its impact on the environment.

Bringing Nada Embun to the forefront of recreational greenery, the project has similarly allocated ten acres to dedicated green areas. These include its eight concept parks, a recreation lake and a multi-purpose pavilion. These open areas were specially designed as gathering spaces, revitalising human connection with outdoor movie events and picnic turfs.

With the express purpose of encouraging an active, outdoor lifestyle, the development introduces its bicycle lane, designed around Nada Embun for the community's enjoyment.

Residents will also be able to indulge in Seremban's scenic beauty together with its family street.

Prioritising the health and well-being of its residents, Nada Embun aims to cultivate a strong community with its multi-tiered security. These are features involving closed-circuit television (CCTV), access cards, perimeter fencing and security patrolling.

Nestled in Malaysia Vision Valley, the development itself is within reach of a bustling commercial area, with banks, restaurants, hospitals and shopping centres such as AEON Seremban 2, Palm Mall, and Mydin Mall. The area has approximately 20 educational institutions to choose from, ranging from private learning centres and international schools to universities.

Nada Embun is available through the North-South Highway, and Lebuhraya Seremban-Port Dickson, as well as 9 km from the KTM Seremban station.

Growing legacy

Having won multiple development and architecture awards, Seri Pajam Development began its journey in Negeri Sembilan and is set to expand

its reach with its transformational philosophy of bringing new meaning to lifestyle.

With the goal of changing the perception towards quality living, the property developer goes beyond providing people with their dream homes. Seri Pajam Development looks at the bigger picture to create thriving communities in its areas of development, from mere forests to neighbourhoods of happy families.

In addition to its quality building and affordable prices, Nada Embun provides young families, single owners and first-time buyers with financial benefits, including up to 36 months of 0% interest instalment payment plan and a loyal customer program. Nada Embun buyers need not bear costs such as sales & purchase agreement (SPA) legal fees and stamp duty of the memorandum of title.

With the upcoming launch of 2-storey terrace home, Nada Embun offers a unique and desirable development project that is open for sale soon. For those who are interested to be the first to grab your preferred 2-storey home unit. For more information, call 1700 81 5925. 📞



Nada Embun

@ SEREMBAN 2 SOUTH

FREEHOLD



minimalist living
endless happiness

Artist's Impression


smart home features


multi-tier security

201
acres development

10
acres green area

8
concept parks

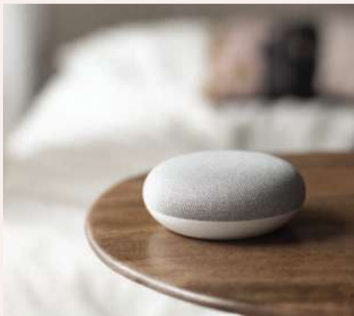
1
recreation lake



Intelligent Welcome Device



Keyless Access



Voice Control Home



Smart Light Switches



Artist's Impression

Another Prestigious Project by:



CENGGAM KOTA SDN BHD (818199-X)
PT9889, Jalan BBN 1/3J Putra Point, Putra Nilai, 71800 Nilai, Negeri Sembilan.

The information contained herein is subject to change without notification as may be required by the relevant authorities or recommended by the Architects or Engineer and cannot form part of an offer or contract. All renderings are artist's impression only. All measurements are approximate. Whilst every reasonable care has been taken in providing this information, the developer, owner and managers cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracy. All the above items are subject to variations, modifications and substitutions as may be required by the Authorities or recommended by the Architects or Engineer.

1700 81 5925
seripajam.com.my



All the single ladies



Considerations for single women and single mother-centred homes

By LIEW JIA YI (YANIKA)
yanika.liew@thestar.com.my

A humanistic approach to property places human culture and environment at the heart of building design. With the goal to address the needs and values of its community, a human-centred approach makes homes work for the people. Single women make up a large proportion of women in Malaysia, so what kind of homes are they looking for?

“Lifestyle, routine, safety and security issues contribute to the factor when one considers the type of properties for living,” RSP Architects Healthcare Architecture director Ezlin Tajuddin said.

The term single women itself encompasses a wide range of people, such as older women, separated women, students or professionals, each with their own priorities and goals.

According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia, the female labour force participation rate reached 55.3% in 2022, with the number of women in the workforce steadily increasing from 2019 to 2022. Well on our way to meeting the developmental goal of gender equality, women are becoming much more independent as the years continue. This comes with increased financial freedom, as they become increasingly more powerful in the economy, especially when it comes to buying property.

“Women who are single mostly are career and independent women,”

RSP Architects project architect Izura Nasiruddin said.

“Their preference is to have a home that is private, safe, not too big and offers personal space for them to enjoy their hobby. Most single women are residing alone. They enjoy having the entire space solely to themselves as it gives them freedom and privacy. They can decorate the space that suits their personality and needs.

“The area needs to have layers of security and makes them feel safe and secure. Houses that offer facilities and are surrounded with amenities which ease them to manage their single life. Hence it is seen that single women would prefer apartments, service apartments or condominiums with a private garden and breathtaking view and located in urban areas,” she explained.

IQI Realty subsales team leader Felicia Lee agreed that single women often look for condominiums or apartment properties. These come from factors of safety, where a woman living in a smaller area will be surrounded by other units and a tighter community. An apartment would also be more affordable as compared to landed homes, with a lower need for maintenance.

Ezlin pointed to properties that were designed to be compact and modern, with well-being and sports facilities, as well as tight security as the critical factors that lead the majority of single women to prefer multi-storey residences.

“Current trends in multi-storey residences have a work, live and play centric approach, which suits the lifestyle of single women. Security tiers at multi-storey residences convince single women that their safety is assured and assistance is within reach especially when they are alone,” Ezlin added.

The issue of security is not a new concern for home buyers but certainly a more pressing one when it comes to women living alone, or even women living with other women. With these priorities, there is more of an emphasis on gated residences, as well as other safety measures such as card access to parking or closed circuit television (CCTV) options.

Maxland Real Estate Agency Royston Lau pointed to the fact that these guarded homes, whether it be condominiums or terrace houses, would be the first choices as they would also have the 24 hours security guard services to assure their safety and security.

There was also the option of a panic button in the master bedroom and the main door entrance, which could be linked to the security guard should any emergency occur.

As with many homebuyers, the location of the property would be near amenities like restaurants, banks, shopping centres, schools and other learning centres. The nearer the amenities, the easier it would be for home owners. The availability of public

(ABOVE)
Single women have a variety of factors to consider when looking for homes.

transport like the LRT or MRT will also be cost saving for petrol and parking.

“Most of the single women will look for studio or SoHo (Small-office home-office) units because they don't really need a spacious place and studio or SoHo is easier to do the cleaning. Secondly are the amenities like near supermarkets, schools and public transportation,” Tech Real Estate team manager Terence Tih agreed.

Lifestyle designs

“Women are easily attracted to colours [such as ones that] shine, vibrant, bright, soft and warm tones,” Izura said.

As with anyone else, preferred materials are those that come with value and quality. There would also be decorative shapes such as curves, with sleek and clean designs, and pleasant aromas. Designs and decorative furnishing could be associated with calming motifs of flowers and nature.

Of course, these design choices are subject to the personality of its user – regardless of gender, women are not a monolithic group. Home owners may choose to decorate their homes with their own preferences, in consideration of their affordability and lifestyle.

RSP Architect senior architect Freda Tanty Ismail noted that colours that evoke a sense of peace and comfort would be suitable for an urban lifestyle, such as natural greens, or an interconnection between indoor and outdoor living spaces. Especially with



"The mirror reflects light around the room, as light can help to add a sense of spaciousness," Lau said.



Lifestyle, routine, safety and security issues are factors in looking for a home, Ezlin said.



"The kitchen and multi-purpose furniture is their main consideration," Tih said.



"Women who are single mostly are career and independent women," Izura said.



(LEFT) Children-friendly design choices include family spaces with colourful palettes, Freda said.

"Mothers tend to enjoy homes that have ample space fit for their children and small family. It is not too small and it doesn't have to be too big. The space and environment that is comfortable, safe, secure and healthy for her children to grow up.

- Izura



Children friendly homes

"Single mothers have different interests than women who are single," Izura said.

"Mothers tend to enjoy homes that have ample space fit for their children and small family. It is not too small and it doesn't have to be too big. The space and environment that is comfortable, safe, secure and healthy for her children to grow up,"

"[She will look for] the type of property that is affordable to her finance as she donned the role of a mother, father and the breadwinner in her family. So landed property like a townhouse, link house or semi-detached is the best concept as it is not too small nor too big," she pointed out.

For those who must take children into account, Ezlin noted that single mothers would prefer a landed residence or townhouse with a sizable yard.

"These types of properties have the quality of outdoor spaces within the property fencing. This allows single mothers to observe their children's outdoor activities while being assured of the safety issue. Terrace dining, BBQ, gardening activity, outdoor play, washing cars, and laundry drying are part of the activity that single mothers

would expect to be able to do with ease and security, thus, landed residence comes with these spaces within its fence," Ezlin said.

"Multi-storey residences may pose safety risks to children such as falls, lift and stairs accidents, and this may be a concern to mothers when choosing such properties," she added.

Child friendly homes are better without a balcony, Lee said. Other options would include children friendly lockset windows and bathrooms, particularly caution for the latter, as water and a slippery surface can be dangerous for children.

Instead, child-friendly interior design must have suitable ergonomics, large spaces for activity and sensible and safety-centric design furniture. Some certain materials and finishes would be able to elevate a child's sensory, as well as low-maintenance interior fittings. These include anti-bacterial surfaces, infection control, or washable paints, for all those messy phases every child goes through.

Freda pointed to a range of child-friendly design choices that would be able to create a welcoming environment. These included a colourful palette, surroundings with curve forms, safe materials and fit-

outs and interactive spaces that promote physical activity. These could be choices of furniture that are rounded, or devoid of sharp edges, as well as placed at a height that is easily accessible and reachable. Choose furniture that is not only soft but durable.

These methods refer to children's ergonomics, which encourage children to play and study in a safe space. Children should also be encouraged to utilise outdoor spaces, as well as minimalist and calm spaces with the provision of playrooms.

"Design for children generally is easily characterised by colours that define their gender and age, colours that are vibrant, bright and cool," Izura said.

"When designing a space for children it is all about creating an ample space to allow the children to express themselves, not limiting their potential and process of growing up, help the children to think, play and learn," she added.

Mothers would also take care to arrange for spaces that will allow them to show off their child's accomplishments, whether it be framing art on the wall, or displaying their certificates and trophies. 🏠

Malaysia's recent heat, designs that encourage natural ventilation for cool and clean air would also be favourable for the working woman.

"The kitchen and multi-purpose furniture is their main consideration. It is good if the unit has a kitchen island because it can be used as a dining table too which could save some space in the house. A sofa-bed is another good choice too," Tih said.

Lau noted that a minimum of two rooms would be necessary for a woman living alone, with storage and utility rooms as an additional advantage.

"The master bedroom would be bigger in order to have a walk-in wardrobe, as ladies will need space for their collections, such as special event dresses, shoes and branded bags. Attached bathroom with space for full wall mirror and countertop basin. The mirror reflects light around the room, as light can help to add a sense of spaciousness," Lau said.

"A kitchen cabinet designed to allocate space for a washing machine with the dryer above it, with oven space for easy monitoring and operating instead of locating them at the utility and drying area," he added.



Keeping an eye on the budgetary measures

A recap on Budget 2023's impact on the property industry



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

THE recent tabling of Budget 2023 did not inject direct allocation towards the real estate market but the existing initiatives remain intact. This will somewhat stabilise the industry as a result of the fiscal adjustments because the existing tendencies will not be considerably altered.

As a result, market sentiments are showing an anticipated improvement in both prices and unsold inventory. StarProperty's predictions for the property sector are similar to Asia's global real estate technology group Juwai IQI's.

"Our 2023 prediction remains the same. This year, transaction activity will rise by up to 3%, which will help the home market. Since both domestic and foreign consumers visit the exhibition suites again, developers with appealing new projects will successfully introduce them in this market," said Juwai IQI co-founder and group chief executive officer Kashif Ansari.

Although Stamp Duty is a significant source of income, the government has concluded that extending the full stamp duty exemption for residences up to RM500,000 until the end of 2025 will be better for the economy. The Stamp Duty exemption rate will be enhanced to 75% for homes up to RM1mil in value. The stamp duty exemption is crucial because these fees lower consumers'

purchasing power and deter them from downsizing or upgrading. This prevents younger people from purchasing larger homes to suit their expanding families and confines older couples in houses that are too big for them. Whether purchasing or selling a home, the Stamp Duty exemption will ease the process.

The allocation to help gig economy workers obtain mortgages has been increased to 20,000 borrowers and RM5bil. Without this assistance, the growing numbers of gig workers will be shut out of the housing market, making this a crucial step. That would prevent them from acquiring homes, which is the safest and most effective way to generate wealth and security.

"There are more than four million gig workers in Malaysia, and these individuals usually have no fixed income. That makes it hard for them to obtain a traditional mortgage from a bank to buy a home. The housing credit guarantee for gig workers will help as many as 20,000 Malaysians buy their own home and take a giant leap forward in creating financial security for their families," added Ansari.

For the transfer of property by the use of love and affection, the government has instituted a new threshold to help less wealthy Malaysians without placing an excessive burden on the wealthier group.

For properties valued at less than RM1mil, there would be no stamp duty while for properties valued at more than RM1mil, the stamp tax would be 50%.

"There are more than four million gig workers in Malaysia, and these individuals usually have no fixed income. That makes it hard for them to obtain a traditional mortgage from a bank to buy a home."

– *Kashif Ansari*

With the aid of this exemption, Malaysians can assist a spouse, child or grandchild to improve their housing situation. It can reduce the number of vacant properties in the country and stimulate new development.

The amended Budget includes several programmes that together will spend over RM2.2bil on enhancing the calibre of the nation's current housing stock, either via rehabilitation and repair or through new construction. The government's measures to upgrade the housing stock are a positive move.

The different efforts include creating and renovating housing for active-duty military personnel, fixing lifts in low-cost strata dwellings, and renovating and building homes in rural locations. Also, there are fresh funds for the Rumah Mesra Rakyat Program, the People's Housing Program (PPR), and Malaysian Public Housing Projects.

These budgetary measures alone would result in the construction of more than 35,000 new houses for lower-income Malaysians and 7,000 for the armed forces, agreed Ansari. 🏠

Budget 2023 at a glance

<p>Stamp Duty Extended to 2025</p>	<p>Housing Credit Guarantee Increased</p>	<p>New Threshold on Transfer of Property by Way of Love and Affection</p>	<p>Affordable Housing for the Rakyat</p>
------------------------------------	---	---	--