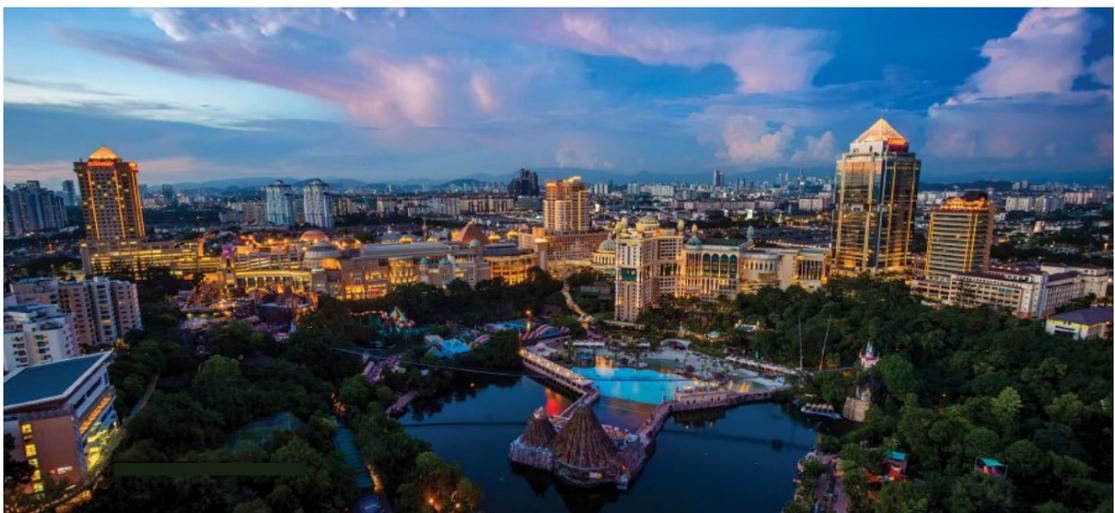


Focus on smart sustainable cities

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Sunway City Kuala Lumpur is resurrected from tin-mining land. Pic courtesy of Sunway Group

MALAYSIA is home to about 30 million people and Kuala Lumpur is one of the densest cities in East Asia.

It is estimated that 75 per cent of Malaysians are living in cities and 90 per cent will be living within cities in 2050.

“With a little math, that breaks down to about 21 people migrating to Kuala Lumpur or be born in it every hour. With this rapid urbanisation rate, it is now more important than ever to build well,” said Cheng Jew Keng, chief operating officer of Sunway Property and Facilities Management (SPFM), Sunway Group’s asset management firm.

Sunway Group, founded by Tan Sri Jeffrey Cheah, has a unique ability to build sustainable cities in Malaysia and is a market leader at it.

The group developed Sunway City Kuala Lumpur (Sunway City KL) in Bandar Sunway, which is resurrected from a tin-mining land.

“Sunway City KL was built on a tin-mining wasteland and is a product of outstanding rehabilitation and restoration efforts. It is now a sustainable model city attracting the attention of academics and corporations from around the world,” Cheng told NST Property.

Sprawling 323.75ha, Sunway City KL is Malaysia’s first fully-integrated green township with Green Building Index certification and a Low Carbon City as certified by the Malaysian Institute of Planners.

Located just a 20-minute drive from Kuala Lumpur city centre, Sunway City KL has a built-up of more than 60 million sq ft comprising world-class facilities, and attracts some 42 million visits every year.

It encompasses an enviable portfolio of more than 10,000 residential and commercial units, in addition to the multi award-winning hospitality, retail, leisure, healthcare and education components.

Cheng said Sunway City KL is also regarded as a safe city and aims to become a smart sustainable model city, nurturing the communities that live, learn, work and play within it, creating an ecosystem that will inspire a healthy, safe and interconnected society for generations to come.

“Today, Sunway City KL remains one of Southeast Asia’s premier tourist destinations,” he said.

The Selangor Town and Country Planning Development recently recognised Sunway City KL as an Inclusive Development.

In 2017, Sunway City KL bagged an award for Top Smart City Initiative in Asia Pacific excluding Japan in the Smart Buildings category at IDC Government Insights’ IDC Smart City Asia Pacific Awards (SCAPA).

DEFINING SMART AND SUSTAINABLE CITY

Cheng said smart and sustainable cities are urban areas that are resilient habitats for existing populations without compromising the capability of future generations.

“These cities are built with consideration for social, environmental impact and economic progress (people, planet and progress) and make the future the purpose of the present. It has been estimated that more than two-thirds of all humanity will be living in cities... that’s 6.5 billion people.

“Sustainable development cannot be achieved without significantly transforming the way we build and manage our urban spaces. In fact, Goal 11 of the United Nation’s 17 SDGs (sustainable development goals) towards creating a future with no one left behind is sustainable cities and townships.”

In Malaysia, as more attention has been given to improving the way people build and manage their urban spaces in the recent years, Sunway is in a unique position to capitalise on the convergence of three parallel trends—digital revolution, circular economy transition and urbanisation—as it has diverse business verticals as well as capabilities across a full real estate value chain, said Cheng.

“The possibilities are endless. If Sunway can merge these three trends through the Sunway Smart Sustainable Cities Initiative, we will directly impact 500,000 of the population. This is the projected combined population for integrated cities of Sunway City KL, Sunway City Ipoh, Sunway Iskandar, Sunway South Quay, Sunway Velocity, Sunway Damansara, Sunway Penang and the upcoming Sunway Valley City to start with.

“And with this start, with this transitioning its urban spaces into circular, intelligent cities, Sunway has the opportunity to deliver widespread socio-economic and environmental benefits with the potential to positively impact some 15.5 million people in these urban conurbations, both direct and indirect,” he said.

This is equivalent to almost half of Malaysia’s entire projected population of 32.4 million by next year and will positively impact economic growth in states, contributing 60 per cent to Malaysia’s gross domestic product, added Cheng.