



**city&
country**

REAL ESTATE
MATTERS

A fresh start

As we celebrate 61 years of independence, expectations are high for a new Malaysia that is more progressive and inclusive. Real estate experts and players share their hopes for the country and the property market. Turn to Page 4.

Datuk Lai Voon Hon

Group managing director, Ireka Corp Bhd

What is your wish for Malaysia Baru?

My wish for Malaysia Baru is to regain our status as one of the most progressive and advanced countries in Southeast Asia. Malaysia Baru should strive to not only be advanced in terms of technology and business but also in social, political and cultural development.

What are the three most important issues facing the property industry?

Affordable housing for all Malaysians. There is a need for a comprehensive review of all delivery processes, including land and planning approvals, high charges by utilities companies for residential projects and government funds for maintenance of low-income housing.



We should introduce modern planning guidelines for assisted, independent and senior living. We should promote Malaysian My Second Home more. We should promote Malaysia as a regional hub and head office for multinational corporations through incentives and trade promotions so that we can increase the take-up rate of high-end apartments, offices and hotels in city centres.

Which is your favourite historic building in Malaysia, and why?

One of my favourite historic buildings is the old Kuala Lumpur Railway Station. It used to showcase the importance of Kuala Lumpur as the largest railway hub in Malaya. I hope the railway station can soon be restored to its former glory as a modern transport hub and hotel, much like King's Cross St Pancras in London.

