

ASIAN PAC'S DIVERSE AND ORIGINAL REAL ESTATE PROJECTS ATTRACT INVESTORS ACROSS ASIA-PACIFIC



Mustapha Buang, managing director

Touted as Kota Kinabalu's one-stop premier shopping destination and one of its largest retail establishments, Imago KK Times Square has set the bar for shopping centres in Sabah's flourishing capital.

Encompassing 800,000 sq ft of world-class retail, entertainment and dining outlets, the four-level landmark mall forms part of KK Times Square—a modern, vibrant and strategically located 24-hectare mixed-use development project comprised of office, residential and commercial space.

It is Kota Kinabalu's first non-stratified retail establishment with wholly management-owned and operated tenant stores. Since its opening in 2015, it has reached a tenant occupancy rate of 90 per cent with more than 300 retail outlets.

Imago shopping mall and KK Times Square would have been but invisible twinkles on the Kota Kinabalu horizon without the initiatives of industry-leading Malaysian real estate developer Asian Pac Holdings.

A company that is forging a reputation as the partner-of-choice among Asian and Chinese developers, consultants and contractors, Asian Pac is reputed for its first-mover advantage, strong local market knowledge and industry expertise honed over more than 100 years.

With a portfolio of projects ranging from landed real estate, strip malls and high-rise residential towers to township

developments and niche projects such as industrial parks, Asian Pac's generalist approach to property development is a key advantage.

"Being able to tackle a wide range of property types gives us strength in planning wider scale or stand-alone projects effectively," says managing director Mustapha Buang. "Our differential edge is that we look into areas others tend to overlook with educated research. We focus ahead and look at what the potentials are. To a certain degree, we have a first-mover approach by looking into locations, themes and ideas that people have never tried before."

Led by a strong management team of young multidisciplinary professionals, Asian Pac traces its expertise and origins back to 1913. The company entered Kota Kinabalu in the early 2000s through its construction of KK Times Square.

Apart from Imago, KK Times Square also houses The Loft Residences—Asian Pac's premier residential address featuring an exclusive and integrated lifestyle experience.

Nestled within KK Times Square's vast leisure and recreational space, The Loft Residences offers 631 highly sought-after units ranging from US\$413,898 to US\$658,739—and serviced apartments 1,834 to 4,192 sq ft in size.

Listed on the main board of the Bursa Malaysia exchange, the company's business interests include investment

holdings, property development and investment, mall and carpark ownership and trading in building materials. By focusing on property investments with recurrent income such as the ownership and management of around 2,500 car parking bays in KK Times Square, Asian Pac keeps itself afloat through economic fluctuations.

"We are able to renew ourselves frequently because we are quite a small team—compact, agile and capable of quickly adapting to changes," Buang says. "We do everything in-house from leasing to facility management."

Asian Pac's upcoming projects include investments in off-the-radar land banks. It also envisions to expand beyond Malaysia in the future.

Driven to beget positive change in Malaysia through sustainable modernisation, Asian Pac has also earned the BCA Green Mark for its environment-friendly projects. Certified by Singapore's Building and Construction Authority, the BCA Green Mark scheme is an initiative to promote sustainability in the construction and real estate sectors.

"We always see how to make things work rather than see how things can't," Buang says. "We'll still be looking at creating really sustainable projects that work long-term, and we'll never say no to potential investors and partners who can bring added value to the table in terms of concepts and ideas—not just in the monetary sense."



Fu Wing Hoong, group managing director

EITA ELEVATING TO NEW HEIGHTS

EITA is a company with a clear-cut strategy for its business growth. Initially an electrical and electronics components distributor, EITA aspired early on to manufacture its own brand of products for the construction and manufacturing sectors. Leveraging its founders' business background and technical know-how, EITA achieved phenomenal success—realising its milestone public listing in 2012. EITA's manufacturing business contributed more than 60 per cent of the group's revenue of 270.7 million Malaysian ringgit (HK\$517 million) for fiscal year 2017.

Through its home-grown EITA-Schneider brand competing against established international players, EITA successfully installed lift and escalator systems for the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) Line 1 for all underground stations. This was a major infrastructure project that had stringent technical requirements, challenging site conditions and tight deadlines. EITA has proceeded to secure a package for MRT Line 2. It further adds value by providing continuing lift maintenance and repairs.

"Not only does EITA deliver best practices in project execution, we also

have the flexibility and ability to customise to our different requirements," says group managing director Fu Wing Hoong.

EITA also offers a suite of power distribution solutions from low-voltage products to sub-station level. It manufactures a line of bus ducts based on Japanese technology and EITA innovation under the Furutec brand. Another brand is Pyrotec, fire-resistant mineral insulated cables with the recognised KEMA-KEUR certification. This brand is fast gaining greater regional market acceptance.

With the ever-increasing demand for electricity, EITA acquired a local company specialising in the installation of power sub-stations that are able to handle up to 500KV.

EITA aims to be a key regional player. It continues to raise the benchmark with continuing product innovations, quality and safety improvements through unwavering commitment to research and development.

"With strong products, we want to become the market leader in the segments we are in," Fu says. "We would like to capitalise on the opportunities in the Asean and Middle East, and to grow with the right partners."

DML PRODUCTS LAUNCHES THEFT-PROOF, ECO-FRIENDLY HIGHWAY GUARDRAILS

In a move to diversify its business in Malaysia, DML Products is launching this year its innovative highway guardrails that feature eco-friendly materials, easy installation and anti-theft technology.

DML is known as a leading manufacturer of residential and commercial green sun protection solutions, which include metal ceiling and sun louvres.

This segment rakes in around

25 per cent year over year, amid the challenges of a saturated market.

A key feature of doing business with DML is its custom-make services, wherein it accepts designs from clients and fulfils the product as a manufacturer and engineering consultant. "In this market, when people think of custom-made products they think of DML," says CEO Jym Chong. "Our clients do not hesitate to do business with us given our engineering expertise."



Jym Chong, CEO

DML's new highway guardrails go through a powder-coating process instead of hot-dip galvanisation, which means they are safer for the environment and are cost efficient.

While the company launched the new product just this year, it has already bagged a few installation projects in Peninsular Malaysia.

On top of light and eco-friendly materials, the highway guardrails have been redesigned in cooperation with a company in Penang, to be fitted with anti-theft bolts and nuts.

"To improve our product, we started working together with our raw material supplier and with companies in South Korea, a country known for its quality standards," Chong says.

Targeting local expansion in Malaysia to service state public works agencies and private contractors, DML will soon scale up in Southeast Asia as it continuously improves its products through an in-house research and development team, along with the expertise of external parties.

Following Malaysia, DML projects expansion in the Philippines, Singapore and Vietnam, where it houses some offices and a factory that runs 24 hours a day. The company hopes to launch an initial public offering in two years.

HOUSEHOLD NAME SUN JIANG SYMBOLISES QUALITY AND AFFORDABILITY IN HOME CLEANING

For Malaysian consumers, Sun Jiang Trading is more than a household name. The group founded as small home-based bleach manufacturer five decades ago has come to symbolise the highest standards of quality and affordability in home cleaning and personal care products.

Boasting a roster of well-known brands, including Depex, Kiraw, Pipit, Tina & Biwoo, Lonkey, Toman and Liso, Sun Jiang is equally recognised as a partner of choice for original equipment manufacturers in the international space of fast-moving consumer goods. The company is expecting to grow its export arm by up to 15 per cent in five years through new opportunities, partnerships, and an expanded distribution service.

"My father and his business partner started manufacturing at home and going door to door to sell," says Ting Young Kang, managing director. Founded in 1967, the company attracted the attention of Colgate-Palmolive, which



(From left): Ting Young Kang, managing director; and Ting Young Nin, executive director

bought two of its famous brands Kiraw and Pipit before being owned again by Sun Jiang.

Celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, the family-owned business has a

network of 5,000 accounts across Malaysia, attracting deals from big league players such as Tesco and Giant. It has presence in Brunei, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam and Seychelles, and

ties with key supply partner Lonkey Industrial based in Guangzhou, China.

With an international reputation for service reliability backed by a robust distribution network, Sun Jiang is a top choice for global retail and wholesale brands. The company is actively engaged in representing other brands wishing to bring their businesses into Malaysia or venturing into partnerships in non-perishable goods.

Sun Jiang also provides advice to other companies on what types of marketing they can do, whether it be consumer education schemes or learning cultural nuances that consumers could accept.

"We welcome partners that understand our philosophy and share our mindset," Ting says. "We seek distributorships; while in turn we offer networking. Our knowledge of the local market is the value we bring to our partnerships."

RIPi SEES GOLDEN OPPORTUNITIES IN 'SUPER SWEET' PINEAPPLE EXPORT

The demand for natural and nutritious food continuously grows as more and more consumers make conscious decisions for healthier lifestyles.

Putting Malaysia on the map with its golden pieces of juicy and fragrant MD2 (anas comosus) "super sweet" pineapples, Rompin Integrated Pineapple Industries (RIPi) answers the clamour for healthy food while providing a steady source of livelihood for the indigenous population and the local community in Pahang.

"Our brand name ROMPINE is synonymous to premium produce. We aim to showcase the premium quality of fruits from Malaysia to the rest of the world," says general manager Patrick Teoh.

The East Coast Economic Region Development Council appointed RIPi as the anchor company in developing, operating and managing the 607-hectare pineapple plantation to help raise the standard of living in the state.

From sapling and planting research and development to upstream and downstream activities, RIPi oversees the operations to maintain the highest production quality. Other than pineapple, RIPi manufactures tropical fruit snacks such as dried papaya, guava and jackfruit.

RIPi exports 70 per cent fresh fruit and 30 per cent processed products such as fruit snacks and juices. The company primarily caters to China, Japan and South Korea—export markets where consumers have very discerning tastes when it comes to products.

RIPi is now preparing in earnest to serve the biggest consumer market in China as the company is the export permit



Patrick Teoh (left), general manager, and the sales team

Our brand name ROMPINE is synonymous to premium produce. We aim to showcase the premium quality of fruits from Malaysia to the rest of the world

Patrick Teoh, General manager, RIPi

holder in Malaysia that complies with China's stringent health standards and the requirements under the country's General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine. With such accreditations, RIPi envisions greater brand and product awareness internationally.

As it builds its capacity for future growth, RIPi is expanding its plantation wherever feasible. With this development, RIPi plans to expand its pineapple plantation in Malaysia to 5,000 hectares within five years.

"We aim to unite the industry together by providing our know-how and standard operational procedure. In doing so, we hope we can help the industry grow together," Teoh says.

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