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# The Tallest, Biggest and Grandest in 2016

*Leading property developers are continuously launching projects with new concepts that make headlines not only domestically, but on the international platform as well*

by IZZAT RATNA

THE year 2016 might be remembered as a period of mixed signals. While many are cautiously treading in their economic endeavours, the bolder souls march on with projects that might just offer positive impacts to the country.

Public transportation, particularly the rail projects, might have taken much of the limelight, but other multi-billion landmark projects of skyscrapers, cutting-edge smart cities and green parks are also getting similar attention.

Among the highlights are the Merdeka PNB118 Tower, Signature Tower (within the Tun Razak Exchange's (TRX) many parcels), the MITEC building, Taman Tugu, Kuantan Waterfront Resort City, Forest City in Johor and Melaka Gateway, with an estimated combined gross development value (GDV) of over RM166.25 billion, which would keep Malaysian builders and construction soldiers busy for the next 10 to 20 years.

All the projects reaffirm Malaysia's status as a rapid growing nation, despite the odds.

Leading property developers are continuously launching projects with new concepts that make headlines not only domestically, but on the international platform as well.

Here are some of the boldest projects announced throughout the year:

## The Signature Tower

The 92-storey Signature Tower is expected to offer a gross floor area of four million sq ft and a net lettable area of 2.65 million sq ft. It is part of the TRX's project and once completed in mid-2013, it will be the 15th tallest building in the world at a height of 1,440 ft (438.9m).

The RM3.5 billion GDV project is to be developed by Mulia Property Development Sdn Bhd (Indonesia-based developer).

Mulia Property CEO Datuk WH

Lai said the company expects to have an occupancy of at least half-floor space between 17,000 sq ft and 20,000 sq ft for each level upon completion.

"Our blueprint is to complement other iconic towers in Malaysia, giving a fresher and contemporary look. The Signature Tower will fulfil TRX's potential in developing the city as Malaysia's international financial district," he said.

## Merdeka PNB118 Tower

Permodalan Nasional Bhd's (PNB) Merdeka skyscraper, named Menara PNB118, is a 118-storey tower standing at 630m tall with approximately RM5 billion GDV.

The soon-to-be fifth tallest building in the world is the first phase of the Warisan Merdeka project, which is a joint development with a retail mall that sits on 19 acres (7.69ha) of land covering 900,000 sq ft, and the remaining two phases are projected to be completed by 2024.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Najib Razak said, in his keynote address at the launching ceremony of this building, the tower will be the second-tallest tower in Asia and fifth in the list of "mega-tall" buildings globally.

"Iconic buildings helped to define a city as they make a compelling statement about its history. The new tower would also generate both primary and secondary economic spin-off, and "add to Kuala Lumpur's (KL) attractiveness as an investment and tourism destination," he said.

## KL Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC KL)

Malaysian Resources Corp Bhd is adding another iconic landmark to the city centre with the new PWTC KL, which sits on an area of 491,640 sq ft.

The project comprises office buildings, the Putrade Hall, a 250-room six-

star hotel and restaurants with a 70-storey tower, which is expected to be completed in 2020.

The building will also incorporate a mosque, which can accommodate a congregation of 5,000 people at one time and a two-storey shopping podium.

At the launch in November, Najib said physical construction work on the 70-storey tower would begin on May 11, 2017, in conjunction with the birth of Umno.

He also added that with the construction of the new headquarters, the existing Tun Razak Hall would be transformed into a two-storey hall, while Merdeka Hall, Tun Hussein Onn Hall and Tun Dr Ismail Hall would be upgraded as a local business centre and venue for corporate events. No GDV has been announced as yet.

## The Malaysian International Trade and Exhibition Centre (MITEC)

Naza TTDI Sdn Bhd recently finished constructing the RM650 million new MITEC building, which sits on a 13.1-acre piece of land, surrounded by facilities such as Grade-A offices and regional retail centres.

It is expected to accommodate about 40,000 visitors at once for meetings with about 11 exhibition halls, 10 break rooms and three media centres across three levels.

Naza TTDI deputy executive chairman and group MD SM Faliq SM Nasimuddin said in *The Malaysian Reserve* report that the new convention centre will encourage further growth to the business tourism and the meetings, incentives, conferences, and events industry, in tandem to host international events in the future.

## Taman Tugu Project

A not-for-profit corporate responsibility, the Taman Tugu initiative is aimed at conserving, activating and

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connecting a 66-acre rainforest park in the heart of KL.

The project is a public-private-civil society partnership initiative spearheaded by Khazanah Nasional Bhd, in collaboration with the Kuala Lumpur City Hall and various partners from the public and private sectors, as well as civil society organisations.

The Taman Tugu project will focus on regenerating the secondary forest area surrounding Tugu Negara into a rich and sustainable urban rainforest park, on land that has been officially valued by the government at approximately RM2.1 billion.

Under a comprehensive forest regeneration plan, approximately 1,000 trees will be conserved, while more than 5,000 ethnic Malaysian rainforest trees suitable to the terrain will be planted, blending in with existing trees in the area to mature naturally into a forest reserve.

The conservation and replanting strategy is undertaken in consultation with Forest Research Institute Malaysia and Malaysian Nature Society.

Taman Tugu will also offer a recreation and learning environment for visitors. This includes a community and family-focussed area comprising Malaysian food and beverage (F&B) outlets and stalls, play areas for children, and indoor and outdoor event spaces. There will also be learning and education facilities comprising a Rainforest Education Centre, education trails, and a learning and innovation centre open for public use. In addition, there will be outdoor activity areas such as campsites, and running and hiking trails.

### Forest City

The project is South-East Asia's first and largest mixed-use green develop-

ment in terms of the number of units to be built with a vertical greenery and smart-city design theme.

It is expected to fuel the economic development of Iskandar region, the main southern development corridor in Johor and neighbouring Singapore. There are light industries including education, health-care and tourism, which will be the main economic pillars of growth at Forest City.

Forest City is a car-free zone, luxury green living co-existing with smart technologies and amenities.

Forest City is estimated to have a GDV in excess of RM100 billion over 20 years, the most ambitious project by Country Garden. Located next to Singapore, Forest City will play a part in Singapore's development, allowing residents to enjoy the conveniences of big-city Singapore along with the relatively cheaper cost of living in Malaysia.

### Kuantan Waterfront Resort City

The Kuantan Waterfront Resort City, with a GDV of RM15 billion, is a project that spans over the next 10 years, to be built by a consortium established by Bina Puri Holdings Bhd and CCCC Dredging (Group) Co Ltd.

Bina Puri is expected to undertake the development of the waterfront, while the reclamation work will be carried out by CCCC Dredging.

The development comprises residential and commercial developments and education centre, as well as medical tourism facilities, which will be developed in four phases. The first phase, with a GDV of RM350 million, comprises two blocks of serviced apartments and a waterfront F&B complex.

### Melaka Gateway

The RM40 billion project in Malacca known as Melaka Gateway will open its doors to visitors in 2018.

The 609-acre project is being developed by KAJ Development Sdn Bhd (KAJD) and the first phase is expected to attract some 900,000 visitors including international cruise passengers during the first year of operation.

KAJD CEO Datuk Michelle Ong said the first phase will be built on Pulau Melaka, and it will include Malaysia Eye, two hotels, several resorts, a heritage walk, a fashion district and a marina terminal.

The company obtained the concession for the project in September 2010 and received all approvals for the project in September 2015.

KAJD will be the master developer of the project and is currently in negotiations with various potential partners and investors for the project.

Melaka Gateway is a project with 12 precincts including residential, commercial, cultural, entertainment and lifestyle elements. It is scheduled for completion by 2025.

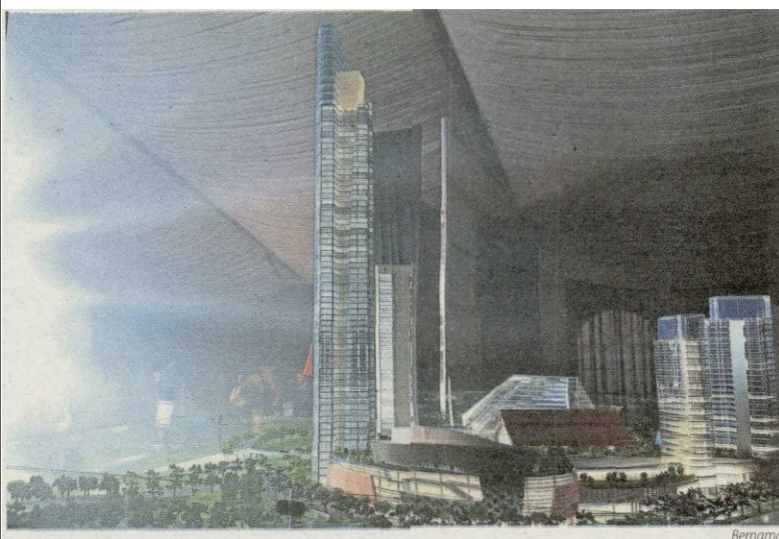
The 12 precincts are Gateway Entertainment Precinct, Melaka Marina & Cruise Centre, Melaka Historical Walk, Gateway Maritime Arena & Beacon, Branded Fashion District, International Theme Park, Melaka Cultural Walk, Waterfront Marina Villas & Resorts, Gateway Wellness & Lifestyle Precinct, Melaka Skyline Apartments, Lohas Park & Residences and Eco Isle Resorts.

The marina terminal is expected to be the largest in Asia, tapping into the growing number of cruise ships plying the route, which currently do not stop at Malacca due to lack of facilities.

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**Menara PNB118, the soon-to-be 5th tallest building in the world, is the 1st phase of the Warisan Merdeka project launched by Najib (front row, second from left)**



**A replica of PWTC KL**