

## Q&amp;A with Malaysia's top developers and theedgeproperty.com launch partners

## Always a ripe time for long-term buyers

## FROM PAGE 7

We are of the opinion as well that many prospective investors out there will find this an effective tool to thoroughly gain information on a certain property, its surrounding amenities and its estimated value.

## Ung Lay Ting

HEAD OF MARKETING &amp; SALES, TROPICANA CORP BHD



## How would you describe the current Malaysian property market?

It is generally agreed that the Malaysian property market is going through a challenging time owing to various cooling measures introduced by the government to curb excessive speculation. The banks have also been more stringent with their lending policies towards the property sector. Given such a scenario and the implementation of GST, it was not surprising to see a softer property market.

However, we observe that buyers' interest remains healthy, sustained by a growing middle-income population. Landed properties and integrated developments that are strategically located, and have good accessibility and connectivity have generally fared well compared with other developments.

For example, our first two serviced apartment blocks in Tropicana Gardens are almost fully sold, and we have just launched our third serviced apartment block. Tropicana Gardens is a mixed residential project in bustling Kota Damansara, and it has a direct link to the MRT station.

We have also enjoyed positive take-up of Tropicana Metropark in Subang Jaya. Our first and second phases have recorded a take-up rate of more than 85%.

**Do you foresee either more challenging or better times ahead in the next 12 months?** Honestly, it is really hard to tell how things will pan out in the next 12 months, as a large part has to do with external market environments that the industry players have no control over, such as the state of the country and global economy, bank lending policies and interest rate movement. However, there will always be buying interest from genuine property buyers with good financials. If you have good financials, are taking a longer-term view and are buying for own-stay or upgrading

from smaller homes, anytime is a good time to buy.

**What would you advise property investors and homebuyers to do in the current market?**

Like I said earlier, it is always a good time to buy property for genuine buyers with good financials. The key is not the pricing [of the] level of entry, or state of the property cycle, but rather location, location and location!

**How important are information and research or data, and analysis to property investment?**

All these are important considerations in framing a good buying decision that one will not regret later on. It's like doing your homework before buying into anything. The more research you do, the better informed you will be, and the less likelihood you will make a bad investment later on.

**What are your thoughts on theedgeproperty.com's endeavour to provide tools to help buyers and sellers make better investment decisions?**

It is a right move in the right direction. As *The Edge* has, over the years, built up a solid reputation [as] a third-party, unbiased, opinion leader [in] the property industry, it is high time that this knowledge, wisdom and information be passed on to more property investors alike so that everyone can be an informed property investor!

## Teh Chin Guan

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER (PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT), IOI PROPERTIES GROUP BHD

**How would you describe the current Malaysian property market?**

The market is undergoing a consolidation, triggered by weak sentiments caused by the imposition of GST, the ringgit depreciation, stringent loan approvals, and partly by the challenging global economic situation.

**Do you foresee either more challenging or better times ahead in the next 12 months?**

People are [adopting] a "wait and see" attitude in view of the [factors I've given]. When the situation becomes clearer and stabilises, and people have adapted to the new policy, the market will come back and experience activity from pent-up

demand. Nevertheless, affordable properties will still receive a healthy response, underpinned by shortage of properties in this sector.

**What would you advise property investors and homebuyers to do in the current market?**

Investors and homebuyers should be able to get good value properties during this time as developers are offering innovative sales packages and more affordable properties to stimulate sales. As there is plenty of choice, they should be selective in terms of location and only buy from established developers.

**How important are information and research or data, and analysis to property investment?**

These are important to enable the developer to design and market properties that meet the selected market segment's needs or expectations, and to cater to customers with specific preferences.

**What are your thoughts on theedgeproperty.com's endeavour to provide tools to help buyers sellers make better investment decisions?**

This is a good initiative as these tools would certainly contribute to a more buoyant property market. Equipping potential buyers and sellers with more relevant information means quicker decisions on both sides and hence more transactions.

## Chow Chee Wah

MANAGING DIRECTOR, GAMUDA LAND

MOHD IZWAN MOHD NAZAM/THE EDGE PROPERTY

**How would you describe the current Malaysian property market?**

Since 4Q2013, the market in general, especially in urban regions, has been normalising itself from all the cooling measures imposed by the government. However, the supply and demand bearings vary if you take a more in-depth view of different market segments. The supply of commercial properties has outstripped present market needs, but it's a very different situation with residential properties. While the incoming residential supply has increased 8.5% in the Greater KL, newly completed projects have decreased 13.8%, and new launches are down 18.3% from 2012. So, currently,

there is actually more demand than supply in this segment.

**Do you foresee either more challenging or better times ahead in the next 12 months?**

"Stabilised and sustainable growth" will be a more suitable [description of the market]. The market needs to revamp and reinvent itself to meet the demands and expectations of a more mature property landscape.

Buyers and investors alike...are much more discerning and cautious; they will be looking for products that will not only create short-term gains, but that are also long-term value-generating properties in various aspects.

**What would you advise property investors and homebuyers to do in the current market?**

Deep research. Look beyond the obvious. Act upon real data and omit hearsay from your decision-making. Price point and location aside, actual value-for-money products have to offer beyond quantifiable numbers. Whether you are a seasoned investor or a first-time homebuyer, you need to analyse the qualitative values of your investment to ensure quantum gain over a longer investment period.

**How important are information and research or data, and analysis to property investment?**

Absolutely critical. Other than reliable information sources, the ability to do research analysis in property investment plays a crucial role to assist both homebuyer and investor to make a wiser decision on buying properties. Only with verified data in hand will you have a clearer picture of market trends to predict the appreciation rate of properties.

**What are your thoughts on theedgeproperty.com's endeavour to provide tools to help buyers and sellers make better investment decisions?**

While the explosion of information accessible through various mobile devices may have helped to create greater transparency in property transactions, the platform itself can be easily muddled by irresponsible profiteers. Hence, with the backing of a reliable and proven record of The Edge Media Group, the establishment of theedgeproperty.com will be exceptionally informative and useful for homebuyers and investors to do thorough research on buying properties.

## Anwar Syahrin Abdul Ajib

MANAGING DIRECTOR/CEO, UEM SUNRISE BHD

**How would you describe the current Malaysian property market?**

The performance of the market during 1Q2015 has been very much in line with our expectations. It follows an active year for the residential market in 2014 and while demand for property has slowed somewhat, properties in popular areas such as Kuala Lumpur, Penang and Nusajaya remain popular among domestic and foreign investors. Demand for properties in the middle-income range also remains stable as private domestic interest has been supported by an employment rate that has been increasing.

CONTINUES ON PAGE 12