







BY WONG KING WAI

eeting the management team of Sunsuria
Bhd at its Kota Damansara headquarters
is like watching a group of friends at a
casual gathering. But the lighthearted
banter and easy smiles belie the team's
steely determination to build Sunsuria
into one of the country's premier property developers.
Headed by executive chairman Datuk Ter Leong Yap
the company—which was once a private, boutique developer— has grown into a listed entity with several
developments under its belt and a flagship 525-acre

township development — Sunsuria City. Sunsuria has gained a loyal following. The success of its projects has given it the confidence to strive to reach greater heights. Ter says one of its winning strategies is setting its goals in five-year blocks. These plans are reviewed and revised periodically to keep up with the times. This is done with a team that includes Ter, CEO Koong Wai Seng and head of marketing and sales Simon Kwan.

Last year, Sunsuria achieved its sales target of about RM400 million and for its financial year ending September (FY2017), it hopes to hit RM933 million on launches worth RML5 billion. Ter says there will be launches in Sunsuria City and Setia Alam.

"Last year, we launched certain commercial parcels in Sunsuria City, including Bell Avenue and Jasper Square, to test the market," says Koong, adding that due to the positive response, the company is confident it will reach its sales target this year. Bell Avenue sits on 7.4 acres and offers 78 retail units.

Bell Avenue sits on 7.4 acres and offers 78 retail units. They were launched in December 2015 and have all been sold. The units were priced from RM2.2 million with built-ups from 2,282 sq ft. The project has an estimated gross development value of RM172 million. Jasper Square was launched in February last year and is 74% taken up. The project, with a GDV of RMI34 million, offers 86 shopofices on 8.53 acres. There are 78 two-storey 20ft by 65ft units, four 2-storey 30ft by 65ft units and four 3-storey 30ft by 65ft shipoffices, with prices starting from RMI.7 million.

The upcoming launches in Sunsuria City and Setia Alam have kept the team busy. As Sunsuria is a town-ship development, it has been planned to ensure that buyers are not only able to buy a home but are also able to grow with the township.
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"We believe in giving value. We want our buyers to be able to upgrade along with the township," says Kwan. The outlook for Sunsuria is good. A Feb 14 Kenanga

The outlook for Sunsuria is good. A Feb 14 Kenanga Research report had an "outperform" call on the stock, and while this may come as a surpise to some given the soft market, Ter and his team were not.

"This fresult is according to plan," says Ter. "What we planned in 2013 — the things that came in, the people we have, our vision — this is expected. In fact, it is to a certain degree a little bit slower than we expected.

"Three years ago, the entire management team met to set our goals and these have been revisited. It is all planned."

This forward planning has borne fruit for the developer, especially with the introduction of Xiamen University Malaysia in its Sunsuria City development. Much has been written about the university and Ter believes it will have a catalytic impact on the township.

Competition is beneficial

Xiamen University Malaysia is just one of many Chinese investments in the country, Late last year, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak announced the signing of 14 agreements with Chinese companies amounting to RM144 billion.

There has been much debate over China gaining too

Ter: We ensure success, therefore, we are able to attract buyers



Koong says he is confident the company will treach its sales target this year

much influence on the economy or Malaysia being "sold out" to China, which the government has denied. In his capacity as president of The National Cham-

In his capacity as president of The National Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia (NCCIM), Ter has said that foreign direct investment from China will only benefit the country in the long term. Moreover. Malaysia has always been open to FDI.

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"Malaysia has always welcomed FDI. In the past, there was a wave of Japanese investors and, today, it has been proved that these investors have created jobs, wealth and good infrastructure and have done a lot of good for the country.

"American electronics came in a big wave as well. Taiwanese investors came, as well as investors from South Korea, Europe and the Middle East.

"In the free trade world, you will face competition, so businesses here must always remain competitive to face these challenges," he says.

The NCCIM represents five constituent chambers—the Malay Chamber of Commerce Malaysia, the Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia (ACCCIM, of which Ter is also the president), the Malaysian Associated Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Malaysian International Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers.

In addition to FDI from China, it is believed that the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) may finally gain traction after President Donald Trump took the US out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement when he took office in January.

The RCEP, which was mooted in 2012, is a regional free trade area that would initially include the 10 Assean member states and those countries that have existing free trade agreements with Asean, namely Australia, China, India, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand.

Ter believes Malaysia will benefit if the RCEP gets





The Olive is Sunsuria's first residential project in Sunsuria City

on its feet. "It is very good for the consumer because you give people a lot of choices ... You open up to the market. Malaysian businessmen will naturally be forced to improve themselves or work with people who are more skilled and learn from them. We believe in competition as it always improves productivity and efficiency — you have to think of a better way to improve your company. That is very good for consumers."

The wave of investment from China will not only impact Malaysia but also the entire region. Ter says Chinese premier Xi Jinping's proposed One Belt, One Road initiative looks to connect China with the rest of Asia and as well as Europe and Africa.

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank has been set up to support the building of infrastructure in Asia-Pacific. The idea of the bank came from China and several countries, including the UK, have applied to join.

This boost in funds for the region will make Asia, especially Southeast Asia, an attractive place to do business. And Malaysia's close ties with China make it an ideal partner for Chinese companies and businesses.

"For China to do well in Southeast Asia, Malaysia is probably its best partner. You look at the friend-ship among the leaders and the history we have. We were the first country to have a bilateral relationship with China during (former prime minister) Tun Abdul Razak's time, 40 years ago. The Chinese have a saying, "Tiān shí dì lì rén hé", which means that all the good factors come together for the success of a project. In terms of timing, geographical advantages and the people, we have all three, so naturally we expect a huge investment in Malaysia," says Ter.

"And due to the language advantage that Malaysia has, Chinese investors are comfortable doing business here," Koong adds.

Planning property launches

Sunsuria is preparing for several new property launches this year. One of the challenges for Kwan, the head of marketing and sales, is to ensure that every project is sold within a year. The industry norm is within three years, according to him.

"From day one, in terms of development, we plan how are we going to market the product," he says. This means that the marketing team is informed about the project during its conceptualisation, so the team builds an in-depth understanding of it before it is launched.

Moreover, Ter adds, the company has a concierge mentality and a system to ensure that all requests, within reason, are met. This customer-centric mindset has garnered Sunsuria strong support.

In addition, Ter's involvement in the NCCIM and ACCCIM has enabled him to make many business contacts. For example, he got in touch with the Malaysia Retail Chain Association, several members of which have bought units in Bell Avenue. To incentivise the scheme, Ter shares that these MRCA members were involved in the design of their units.

"We ensure success, therefore, we are able to attract buyers," Ter explains. The strategy to have ready operators or buyers provides a sense of confidence in the project.

This is the same strategy used to establish Sunsuria City with the setting up of Xiamen University Malaysia. It not only makes the project more attractive, but also piques the interest of potential buyers and investors.





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He believes this is the key to good sales.

While the exact dates of some of the new launches in Sunsuria City and Setia Alam this year are still being finalised, the products that they wish to present are ready.

Last December, Sunsuria soft-launched its first residential project, The Olive, in Sunsuria City. Two towers were launched — the 21-storey Tower A and the 18-storey Tower C — while the 19-storey Tower B was held back. Tower A is fully sold and Tower C is 87% taken up. Tower B opens for sale on March 4 - which is also the day The Olive is officially launched.

The Olive will have 663 units - 240 in Tower A, 216 in Tower B and 207 in Tower C. The 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom units will have built-ups of 818 sq ft and come with a balcony and yard. The selling price is from RM430,000.

Another upcoming launch this month is Bell Suites, next to Bell Avenue. This 17-storev small office/home office block will offer 478 SoHo units and five retail units. The built-ups of the SoHos are 450 sq ft and 970 sq ft, with indicative selling prices starting from about RM341,000 or RM758 psf. The retail units have buit-ups from 1,076 sq ft with an indicative price tag of about RM1.2 million or RM1,139 psf.The block will be directly opposite the main entrance to Xiamen University and within walking distance to the Salak Tinggi Express Rail Link station.

In April, two phases in its second residential project in Sunsuria City, - Monet Residences - will be launched. The 20.9-acre Monet Lily and 30.9-acre Monet was launched last wear Springtime will feature terraced houses. Monet Lily 'to test the market' will comprise 211 units that measure 20 ft by 70 ft, 22 ft by 70 ft and 24 ft by 70 ft and indicatively priced from RM670,000 or RM400 psf. The estimated GDV is RM141.24 million. Monet Springtime will have 308 terraced houses with similar measurements to those in Monet Lily, with indicative prices from RM770,000 or RM420 psf. The estimated GDV for this phase is RM236.94 million.

Both phases of the gated and guarded development will have a high level of security, including patrols, and French-style landscaping and themed gardens.

In Setia Alam, meanwhile, is 6.63-acre The Forum 2, which is slated for launch in July. This mixed-use development will offer three tower blocks - a 33-storey SoHo tower with 653 units, a 31-storey office tower with 349 units and a 41-storey serviced apartment block with 568 units. These three towers will sit atop a 2-storey shopping mall.

The SoHo units will have built-ups of 450 sq ft and 900 sq ft, with indicative prices starting at about RM334,800 or RM620 psf. The estimated GDV is RM215 million.





The Forum 1 in Setia Alam

The office units will range from 666 to 13,347 sq ft with indicative prices starting at RM412,920 or RM620 psf. It will have an estimated GDV of RM244 million.

The serviced apartments will have built-ups of 900, 1,050 and 1,200 sq ft with indicative prices starting at about RM597,000 or RM620 psf. The estimated GDV is RM336 million.

The unique selling point of this project is that it is designed to be self-sustaining — people can live, play and work under one roof. Anchor tenant Village Grocer is looking to take about 10,000 sq ft in The Forum 2, in addition to the 25,000 sq ft it already occupies in The Forum 1, which is next to the new project.

The Forum 1, launched in 2015, features 61 shops and 172 offices with a GDV of RM298 million. The shops are 80% sold, while the offices are all taken up.

It looks like it will be a busy year for Sunsuria, de spite the challenging market conditions.