

COVER STORY

# Tanming keeps a low profile

Some developers do not need a blaze of publicity to sell their products. This is especially true for Tanming Bhd, a township and niche property developer with over 28 years of experience. Tanming has successfully completed over 6,600 units of residential, commercial and industrial properties, while managing to keep a low profile.

One seldom sees advertisements on Tanming's products as the developer prefers to rely on word of mouth and customer testimonies, says its executive director Chen Lai Chin in an interview with *City & Country*.

"Happy and satisfied buyers will help sell products more efficiently than any kind of advertisement. Our belief in offering quality products and doing our best in meeting the needs of our customers have paid off as we have built a reputation for doing that," says Chen, who stresses the importance of offering consistent quality as one slip-up can tarnish a developer's credibility.

Perhaps, another reason Tanming is not on the radar screen is the company's low loan gearings. "We fund our projects internally and do not take loans from banks, so that is why not many bankers know of us. Furthermore, the volatility of the property industry can sometimes be detrimental to the business if over-gearred," she adds.

Tanming was founded in 1979 and is named after its executive chairman Lee Ming Chong and managing director Tan Pau Son, who are semi-retired, leaving the business in the hands of Chen and other professionals in the company.

Tanming's first foray into property development was Taman Taming Jaya in Balakong, Selangor. The RM390-million project was launched in 1986 and, according to Chen, who has been with the company for over 18 years, Tanming had developed the project when the area was a mere rubber estate and when few were

willing to venture into that part of the Klang Valley.

Taman Taming Jaya was completed in 1998 with over 2,269 residential units, 523 factory units and 63 shops and more than 12,000 residents. Tanming's past projects include the RM11.75 million Taman Desa Suria in Petaling Jaya, the RM18.51 Taman Bukit Serdang in Serdang, the RM135.8 million Taman Seri Taming in Cheras and the RM100 million Taman Taming Indah in Sungai Long.

Chen says the developer currently has RM313.37 million worth of ongoing projects and has plans to launch 950 property units, with gross development value of RM560 million in the next four years (refer to the box for more details).

The developer's ongoing projects include the RM35.5 million Taman Seri Minang in Cheras, the RM38.2 million Tiara Bungalows in Bandar Mahkota Cheras, and the RM26.5 million Taman Saujana Damai in Kajang. Taman Seri Minang and Tiara Bungalows have take-up rates of 85% and 40%, respectively while Taman Saujana Damai is fully sold (refer to the box for more details).

One of Tanming's strategies is never to buy development land that is more than 20 miles from Kuala Lumpur. "When you are in the right location and offer landed products, it is hard to go wrong. Also, we believe in prompt payments to contractors as it ensures good workmanship and timely delivery of products," says Chen, who personally inspects construction sites.

She admits that being a woman in the industry can sometimes be difficult as her capabilities are sometimes questioned, but she feels that the best way to deal with sceptics is to do the best job possible.

According to Chen, Tanming's strategy has worked well, especially during the 1997 financial crisis. "We focused on more resilient landed residential subsector, thus forg-



An artist's impression of Taman Taming Mutiara in Sungai Long

## Some ongoing projects

PROJECT	DETAILS	TOTAL GROSS DEVELOPMENT VALUE (RM MIL)
Taman Taming Maju, Balakong	5-storey apartments with 80 units	6.02
Taman Seri Minang, Cheras	76 units of 2½-storey semidees and link homes	35.58
Taman Tanming Indah, Bandar Sungai Long	66 units of 2-storey semidees and 160 apartment units	45.46
Tiara Bungalows, Bandar Mahkota Cheras, Sungai Long	22 units of 2-storey bungalows	38.20
Taman Taming Mutiara, Sungai Long	148 units of 3-storey semidees and bungalows	102.80
Taman Saujana Damai, Kajang	116 units of 2-storey terraced homes	26.50

## Selected upcoming projects

Sungai Long, Cheras	35 acres to be developed into 406 units of bungalows, terraced homes, semidees and bungalow lots	188.00
Taman Meranti Jaya (fourth phase)	354 units of 3-storey terraced homes, bungalows and shop offices	216.40
Country Heights, Kajang	A 10.16 acre development with 23 bungalows	NA
Ukay Perdana, Gombak	60 semidees	72.00
Kajang Hill	57-acres of 2-storey semidees	NA

ing ahead with plans and embarking on three new housing projects during the downturn namely, Taman Seri Taming and Taman Cheras Mewah in Cheras and Taman Taming Impian in Kajang." The projects were completed in 2001.

Tanming is not a public-listed company and it seems content with the status. "We have enough capital to sustain our future projects and we prefer to take our own time to launch projects and make good money."

Moving forward, she says Tanming is venturing into more niche property development such as the RM102.8 million Taman Taming Mutiara in Sungai Long, made up of semidees and bungalows, to cater for affluent buyers. "Housebuyers today want high quality homes with bigger built-up areas. They do not want to renovate or extend their new homes and are willing to pay a premium for such properties."

## In the pipeline

Of the projects in the pipeline for Tanming is the fourth phase of its RM216.4 million freehold Taman Meranti Jaya in Puchong. The 232-acre mixed township of residential, commercial and industrial proper-

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ties is 70% completed. It comprises Tanming Mall and Tanming Boulevard. There will also be 69 units of 2½-storey link-houses scheduled for launch by October priced from RM428,800, with built-ups from 3,020 sq ft.

"We are excited about the launch of our first neighbourhood shopping mall, the Tanming Mall. The units will have wide frontage for retailers and showroom operators to display their products, the banks will have spacious halls and restaurant owners ample seating areas," she says.

The 2-storey Tanming Mall is scheduled to be completed next year. It will have over 14 units of shops with wide frontages of at least 30ft. It will also have a covered pedestrian street walk, with 69 bazaar stalls in between its anchor tenant of an established supermarket chain and shop units.

Together with some 82 units of 3-storey shop offices in Tanming Boulevard, the developer hopes to position the mall and the shop offices as the commercial hub of Taman Meranti Jaya. The shops are priced from RM1.1 million and will be launched in October. The shop offices directly face the main road of Taman Meranti Jaya and Jalan Puchong, which provides easy access to the Damansara-Puchong Highway.

"We offer modern office designs with sleek glass façades, and column-free wide frontages from 25ft to 60ft to provide maximum space. We are targeting financial institutions, IT services, restaurants, cafés, showrooms, speciality stores, service centres and beauty saloons to open their businesses in the Boulevard," she says, adding that 1,245 parking bays will also be provided on both sides of the road and the back lane.

