

“Collectively, there are over one thousand successful Malaysian companies doing business in other Asean countries.”

- P. Ravindran

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KSK Group ventures into property development

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KUALA LUMPUR — KSK Land which was created last year was part of the KSK Group's long term plan to venture into property development, chief executive of KSK Group and managing director of KSK Land Joanne Kua said.

"Last year, we started KSK Land, and that was on the back of almost two years of thinking about that idea and looking into which parts of property development do we really want to go into because when we decided to go into the property development business, it's for the long term," Kua said.

She said it has always been a vision of the Group's chairman to go into property development, but there hasn't been any opportunity to do so in the past.

KSK Group, previously Kurnia Asia Bhd, has ventured into property development through KSK Land which will be developing its maiden project on Jalan Conlay, 8 Conlay, in collaboration with Kempinski Hotels.

"The group now has two core businesses, the insurance and property development, so we really had to take a back seat and look at the vision of what we

want for our property development business and the direction that we wanted to go for the long term."

At the moment, KSK Land doesn't have any concrete plans for the next property development as it wants to focus on 8 Conlay, a RM4 billion Gross Development Value (GDV) project and also its debut project, but Kua said it is always on the lookout for new opportunities.

Kua also said that the revenue from 8 Conlay is expected to represent only a small percentage of KSK Group's development, as its main revenue contributor remains the insurance sector.

She expects the revenue from both core businesses to become more balanced over time.

When asked why KSK Land was chosen as partner in its first venture in Malaysia, senior vice president development of Kempinski Hotels Mike Haemmerli said he believes KSK Land's chosen prime location can put 8 Conlay as a market leader.

Haemmerli said the hotel market in Malaysia is quite strong, and he expects 8 Conlay to be positioned as market leader in terms of rate and occupancy and attract Kempinski's key customer base from Europe, Middle East, China, Africa and



Joanne Kua (left) and Mike Haemmerli at the press conference yesterday. — Pic By Hafiz Sohaimi

Eastern Europe.

He also said Kempinski is looking at further opportunities in Malaysia and Southeast Asia, but it is selective in order to maintain quality.

"Southeast Asia is a strong and important focus for us, so we will look at different opportunities, but we will look at them selectively because it needs to be the right unique property in a destination whereby globally speaking, we're striving for quality rather than quantity," he said.

"Any future developments must fit the standard requirements in terms of location and position-

ing in the luxury market, and it must be something unique."

Kempinski's partnership with KSK Land is unique in, and the exclusive partnership will be the only one in Kuala Lumpur as it wishes to maintain exclusivity of the hotels.

He also mentioned that Kuala Lumpur is key strategic importance to the company's development strategy.

Kempinski is known for its unique hotels which are designed in accordance to the culture and target of its locations. It currently has 75 hotels around the world, most recently in Myanmar and Beijing, and expects to have 84 in the next 12 months and 108 in the near future.

The groundbreaking of the project site will be performed in the first quarter of 2015 and it is expected to be complete by 2020.