

Foreign speakers to share ideas at urban planning meet

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KUALA Lumpur will see architects, engineers, developers and planners from across the globe congregating for the World Class Sustainable Cities 2023 (WCSC 2023) conference to introduce a new era of urban planning to Malaysian cities.

The 14th edition of the conference is jointly organised by Real Estate and Housing Developers Association (Rehda), Malaysian Institute of Planners (MIP) and Malaysian Institute of Architects (PAM).

The event, endorsed by Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL), will take place on Sept 26 at M Resort & Hotel Kuala Lumpur.

WCSC 2023 organising chairman Chan Jin-Wy said the event themed “Resilient Urbanisation: Planning Towards Malaysia Madani” would feature speakers from Malaysia, Australia, Indonesia, Thailand



Mazrina (left) and Chan (third from left) at a press conference at Rehda Institute in Kelana Jaya, Petaling Jaya.

and Singapore.

“We hope to improve resilience, sustainability and liveability in Kuala Lumpur, as resilient urbanisation has become especially important due to the floods that have put pressure on our cities.

“With the help of our international speakers, we can start thinking about how to equip

Kuala Lumpur for natural disasters and also in achieving sustainable development goals.

“These include improving connectivity via public transport, promoting open green spaces, and urban flood mitigation,” he said.

The event will have numerous presentations and network discussions, including a keynote

paper on “Sustainable Urbanisation in a new frontier at Nusantara” by Indonesia’s Nusantara Capital City Authority head Dr Bambang Susantono.

The second keynote paper is “Resilient Urbanisation: Inclusive Cities Through Good Cities through Good City Design” by Futura State, Urbis Group director James Tuma.

The third keynote paper will be “Building Affordable Homes for People and Nature” by Singapore’s Marrow Intelligence managing director Saravanan Sugumaran.

The event has seen around 500 attendees every year, according to Chan, and has gathered industry professionals, government officials, researchers and students.

He said the conference was an opportunity for Malaysia to learn from international speakers whose cities could offer new ideas and inspirations for urban development, with one example being the multipurpose

Benjakitti Park in Bangkok, Thailand.

“In one of Rehda’s post-conference trips to Benjakitti Park, we learned that 4ha to 4.9ha of this wetland was repurposed into a water retention pond in 2020 to help with flood mitigation.

“That was when we noticed that open spaces can be dual-function for the community’s benefit,” he said.

MIP vice-president Datin Mazrina Abdul Khalid said natural solutions like this should be replicated in Malaysia for flood mitigation.

“This solution can already be seen in Putrajaya Wetlands Park, where the recreational space has now become functional too.

“We can potentially expand this to other areas, a good example being the River of Life in Kuala Lumpur,” she said.

The conference also aims to incorporate urban resilience planning into Kuala Lumpur Structure Plan 2040 and the Kuala Lumpur City Plan 2040.