

Shaping resilient cities

KL to host three Asean forums this month to boost policy collaboration

KUALA LUMPUR

MALAYSIA will host three landmark regional events from Aug 10 to 15 at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre, placing cities at the heart of Asean's sustainable development journey.

The Asean Sustainable Urbanisation Forum (ASUF), Asean Governors and Mayors Forum (AGMF), and Meeting of Governors and Mayors of Asean Capitals (MGMAC) will serve as flagship components of Malaysia's Asean Chairmanship 2025.

Convened by the Housing and Local Government Ministry, Urbanise Malaysia, and the Asean Secretariat — in collaboration with Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) as the host city, and United Cities and Local Governments Asia-Pacific and United Nations Human Settlements Programme as co-convenors — the three forums will bring together over 8,000 participants from more than 500 cities in Asean.

These include governors and mayors from all 10 Asean capitals, 156 local authorities from Malaysia, as well as leading voices from government, civil society, professionals, business, academia, youth, and women's groups.

DRIVING ASEAN'S URBAN AGENDA FORWARD

As Asean urbanises rapidly, more than 52 per cent of the region's nearly 700 million people now live in urban areas. Cities have become critical engines for innovation, growth, and social wellbeing, yet they also face rising inequality, infrastructure strain, and climate threats.

These events offer a regional platform to forge new strategies, partnerships, and actions towards a greener, more inclusive and resilient urban future.

"These forums are more than meetings," said Urbanise Malaysia chief executive officer Norliza Hashim.

"They are an expression of Asean's collective ambition to ensure that urbanisation becomes a force for resilience, equity, and sustainability."

ASUF: ADVANCING A PEOPLE-CENTRED URBAN FUTURE

ASUF will feature high-level dialogues, technical sessions, and stakeholder assemblies aligned with Asean Community Vision 2045, Asean's Sustainable Urbanisation Strategy and the Asean Smart Cities Network.



Housing and Local Government Minister Nga Kor Ming (centre) during the pre-launch of the Asean Sustainable Urban Forum, Asean Governors and Mayors Forum, and Meeting of Governors and Mayors of Asean Capitals. PIC COURTESY OF HOUSING AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT MINISTRY

Key themes include:

CLIMATE-RESILIENT Cities, **INCLUSIVE**, Healthy and Caring Cities, **DIGITAL** Transformation and Innovation, and, **COLLABORATIVE** Pathways to Sustainable Cities.

Notably, four stakeholder assemblies — focusing on women, youth, professionals, and business leaders — will surface local solutions and shape inclusive pathways for regional cooperation.

Outputs from these tracks will feed directly into the forum's outcome documents and future programming.

AGMF: STRENGTHENING LOCAL LEADERSHIP IN ASEAN

Since its recognition in 2018, AGMF has become the region's leading platform for local urban leadership.

AGMF 2025 will facilitate policy exchange on governance, finance, innovation, and service delivery — culminating in the AGMF 2025 Declared Actions: "Towards People-Centred, Resilient and Sustainable Asian Cities by 2045".

This declaration will capture shared priorities and local commitments across the Asean urban landscape.

MGMAC: AMPLIFYING THE VOICE OF ASEAN CAPITALS

MGMAC will convene the captains of capital cities for strategic deliberations on shared challenges, from urban mobility, waste management and housing to climate adaptation and digitalisation.

A key outcome will be the Joint Communiqué of MGMAC 2025, articulating coordinated actions and regional alignment among Asean capitals.

MORE THAN DIALOGUE: A CELEBRATION OF URBAN INNOVATION

The six-day event will also feature:

MORE than 100 exhibition booths showcasing urban innovations and partnerships,

WORKSHOPS, roundtables, as well as capacity-building sessions, and,

CHILDREN'S programme featuring Ronda-ronda Kotaraya for children aged 10 to 15 with DBKL, Prasarana and Unicef during KL's Car-Free Day.

These community-based initiatives reinforce Malaysia's commitment to participatory governance and bottom-up transformation.

KUALA LUMPUR STATEMENT TO THE ASEAN LEADERS' SUMMIT

The combined outcomes from ASUF, AGMF, and MGMAC will be consolidated into the Kuala Lumpur Statement on Sustainable Urban-

isation 2025, which will be submitted as official input to the 47th Asean Leaders' Summit this October.

This milestone ensures that local voices and urban priorities are reflected in Asean's highest policy decisions.

TOWARDS A RESILIENT AND PEOPLE-CENTRED ASEAN

With the convergence of policy leaders, city managers, and grassroots actors, these forums mark a pivotal step in shaping Asean's urban future.

They reaffirm Malaysia's leadership in advancing the regional urban agenda and chart a vision for cities that are both future-ready and future-proof.

"Sustainable urbanisation is not just a national policy, it is a shared promise to the rakyat — a promise to shape neighbourhoods and cities that reflect our hopes, honour our diversity, and prepare our children for the challenges of tomorrow."

"Whether in kampungs, PPR flats, or rapidly growing urban centres, our responsibility remains the same — to build cities that care, cities that empower, and cities that belong to everyone."

"Through these Asean forums, Malaysia reaffirms its belief that no city is too small, and no community too remote, to be part of a brighter, more inclusive regional future."



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NORLIZA HASHIM
Urbanise Malaysia
chief executive officer