

SHOWCASING MALAYSIA'S SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

More than 700 World Urban Forum 9 (WUF9) delegates witness Malaysia's urbanisation processes and achievements during seven-day event in Kuala Lumpur

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PETALING JAYA: For a week in February, Malaysia was in the eyes of the world as Kuala Lumpur became the host city of the ninth session of the World Urban Forum (WUF9).

Organised by UN-Habitat and the Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government Ministry, the seven-day Forum, taking place from Feb 7 to 13, saw the participation of more than 35,000 individuals from 165 countries around the world.

With its theme "Cities 2030 Cities for All: Implementing New Urban Agenda", WUF9 was focused on dialogues and discussions centred on sustainable urban development and new methods of planning, managing and living in urban areas around the world.

While dialogues and discussions were a focus of WUF9, participants, especially delegates from foreign countries, were also taken on technical visits by the ministry so that they can witness the country's achievements in urbanisation process and development.

Taking place from Feb 10 to 11, delegates were taken on nine routes, each with a different theme.

The routes' themes were Social Enterprise, Urban Solution and Innovation, New Urban Development, Urban Regeneration, Urban Housing, Urban Greenery, Urban Heritage (Melaka), Urban Heritage (Penang), and Urban Rural Linkages (Carey Island).

The ministry said that over 700 delegates participated in the technical visits, with delegates coming from countries such as the United States, Congo, Kenya and Morocco.

Under the Social Enterprise route, the delegates were shown the proactive steps that the Malaysian government has taken to encourage entrepreneurship, especially for Malaysian entrepreneurs to enter the global marketplace.

"The development of a strong and sustainable entrepreneurship ecosystem is a key economic driver for the nation to remain competitive," the ministry told the delegates.

Among the sites visited on this route were Project B - Youth Cafe and the Herb Garden in PPR Raya Permai.

Delegates on the Urban Solution and Innovation route were taken to Pantai 2 sewage treatment facility, Sunway City, which was the country's first fully integrated township, and the River of Life project, which covered the 10.7km stretch of Klang and Gombak rivers.

The route was meant to show delegates the country's effort to improve the quality of life for urban residents by improving transportation and sewage systems, producing resilient power networks, building sustainable homes and new workplaces, and creating inspiring cultural facilities.

The New Urban Development route took delegates to Malaysia's newest cities, Putrajaya and



Delegates on the Urban Housing route posing in front of the Kuala Lumpur Homeless Transit Centre at Jalan Pahang.



Delegates on the Urban Rural Linkages route posing for photographs with a member of the Mah Meri tribe at the Mah Meri Cultural Village on Carey Island, Port Klang.



Delegates on the Urban Greenery route being given a briefing at the Forest Research Institute of Malaysia.

Cyberjaya, in order to show how new urbanisation efforts can create smart cities where residents can live, work and enjoy leisure time in more socially inclusive and more sustainable cities.

It was a trip through both Kuala Lumpur's history and future for the delegates who went on the Urban Regeneration route, as they were taken to Sentul East and Sentul West, Bukit Bintang City Centre (BBCC), and KL Sentral, where older parts of the city have been transformed into bustling modern areas without losing touch with its history.

"Urban regeneration has been recognised as one of the urban planning mechanisms in Malaysia's

cities especially for dilapidated housing areas, abandoned projects, brownfield sites and old commercial areas," said the ministry of its strategy in regenerating the older areas of Kuala Lumpur.

Delegates on the Urban Housing route were shown the Government's efforts in creating policies to ensure that those in the urban areas, especially those from the middle- and lower-incomes, can have access to affordable housing.

The delegates were taken to visit People's Housing Project (PPR) Seri Alam, Kerinchi Residency Project, and the Kuala Lumpur Homeless Transit Centre.

For the Urban Greenery route,

delegates were shown efforts by the Government to achieve the Garden Nation status by 2020, in which development needed to go hand-in-hand with ecological integrity.

Delegates on this route were taken to visit the Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) and Perdana Botanical Garden.

The delegates taking part in the Urban Heritage (Melaka) and Urban Heritage (Penang) routes were taken to Melaka and Penang to see the careful development within the urban areas, development which took into account both the need to preserve the valuable historical and cultural heritage as well as the need to improve the

quality of life for the growing number for residents in the cities.

The final route, Urban Rural Linkages, took delegates to Carey Island, near Port Klang, to the home of the Mah Meri, a subgroup of the Senoi people.

The route was designed so that delegates can observe the connectivity between urban and rural areas, where good connectivity did not mean that the age-old traditions were forgotten or discarded.

The ministry added that 20 buses were used to ferry the delegates on the nine routes, with two buses reserved for each route, apart from Melaka and Penang, which were served by three buses each.