

Trends

Are these happy times we're seeing?

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Focus

How to get defaulters to cough up

P10



Focus

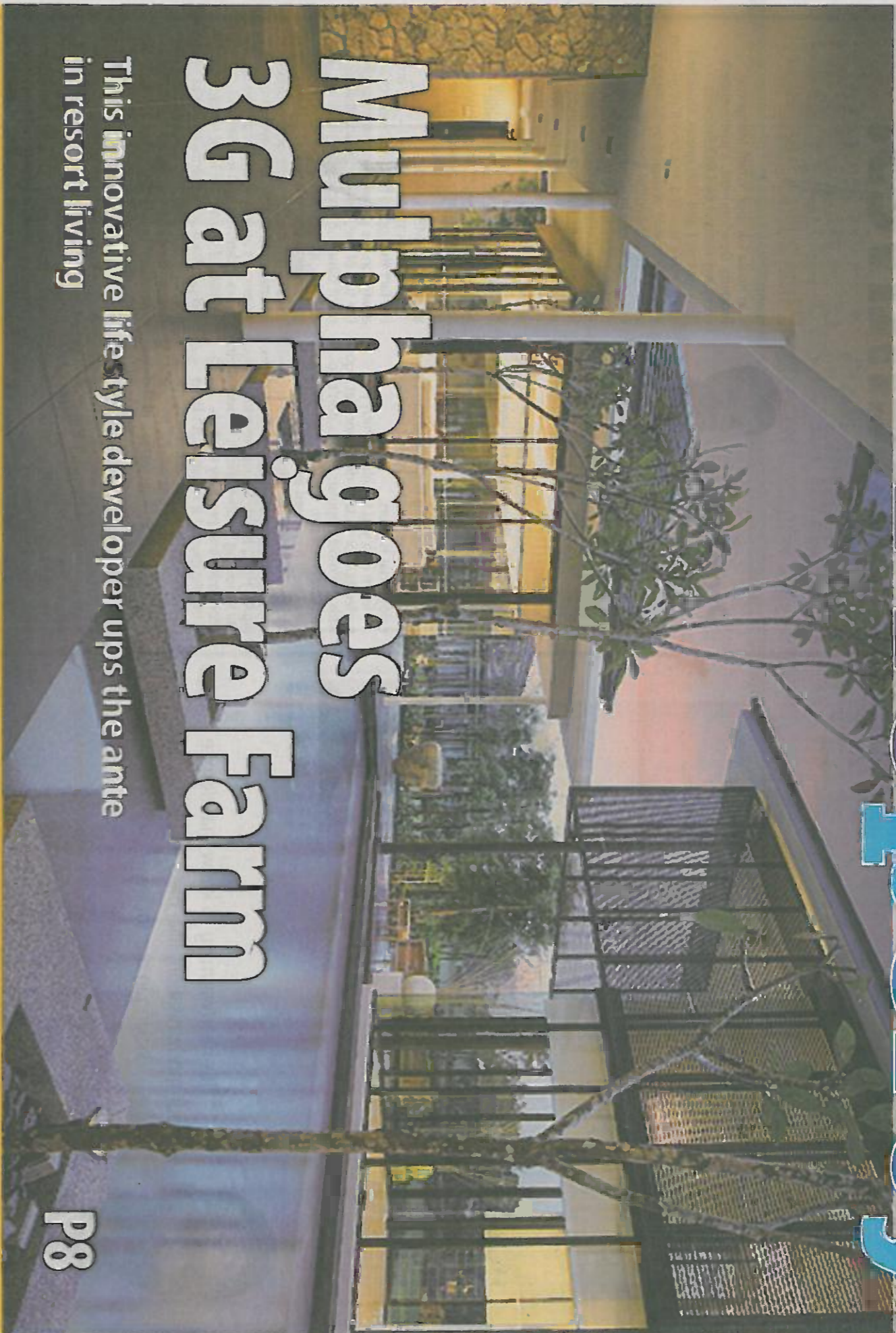
"Who's afraid of a big, bad bomb?"

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STRAITS TIMES
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Pro Property



Mulpha goes 3G at Leisure Farm

This innovative lifestyle developer ups the ante in resort living

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In The Market

> RESIDENTIAL: LANDED



LOTUS SPA VILLAS
Pajam, Negri Sembilan
Country Heights Bhd
Contact: 03-8948 5555

From RM599,888

> RESIDENTIAL: SERVICED APARTMENT



OLIVES RESIDENCES
Subang Jaya, Selangor
Everest Point Sdn Bhd
Contact: 03-5636 5777

From RM732,000

> COMMERCIAL: SHOP LOT



THE ATMOSPHERE
Seri Kembangan, Selangor
Tempo Properties Sdn Bhd
Contact: 03-8942 3663

From RM860,000

Leisure Farm Resort rolls out 3G Villas

The 'Green, Gated, Generations' units are in one of the resort's finest locations

PropertyEyes
By S.C. Cheah

Mulpha International Bhd's Leisure Farm Resort in Celang Patah, Johor, is full of pleasant surprises. This is because each new launch phase has exciting concepts and awe-inspiring luxury residential units that complement the resort's masterplan of being a green, low-density, environmental-friendly and healthy place to live.

In the early days of Leisure Farm, Mulpha initially built palatial show mansions ranging from Colonial, Balinese and Contemporary to old American South styles that have since been sold.

It later introduced many refined houses in seven bungalow precincts - Merbok Springs and Victoria Meadows (one acre plots), Palm Grove, Admiral Heights, Polo View, Bayou Bay, Bayou Grove and Pendas Creek (all with less than an acre) - followed by 11 different architectural and interior design themes such as the innovative village units found in the Garden Court, Pinggiran Bayou, Link 25 and Bayou Water Village precincts.

In Link 25, Mulpha created fair way, zero-lot line bungalows while in Pinggiran Bayou - which in 2008 won the International Real Estate Federation's (Fiabci) coveted Prix d'Excellence award in the Best Residential category - it designed Mediterranean-style courtyard units

fronting a canal.

The most stunning phase of all to date, however, must be Bayou Water Village. A series of elegant houses perched on tranquil waters that are nearing completion and is set to be an award winner.

The two-level semi-detached villas and bungalows are currently priced from RM852,000 and RM1.2 million respectively. The courtyard type that comes with a private garden is priced from RM509,000 apiece.

Each precinct has its own unique clubhouse. In the Bayou Water Village, for example, there is a two-storey clubhouse with an infinity swimming pool, a rustic brick-wall with creepers, sun-deck, multi-purpose hall and serai (lemon grass) terraces hugging certain stretches of a canal that enhances its natural beauty. Residents can also use the facilities of the resort's award-winning main clubhouse, The Bale Equestrian & Country Club at no fee.

Last week, I took my family to once again savour Leisure Farm's resort life-style and all its precincts, explore its 22-acre orchard with a big fish pond, rabbit farm, nursery and residents' vegetable plots; enjoy a speedboat ride from nearby Puteri Harbour to Danga Bay for dinner, cruise down a river to view the resort's mangrove swamps and out to the estuary and open sea; and horse-ride in the international-standard equestrian

centre's riding school. We also checked out the resort's latest offering - the 3G (Green, Gated, Generations) Homes and were amazed to find that four villas have been built - two brand new, luxuriously furnished show-units called The Pavilion Villa and The Loft Villa while two others, each of the same two designs, are almost complete.

What is even more amazing is that the "creek" or stream there has been carved into a picturesque work of art to hug the villas, dotted with lily ponds, a maze, meandering pathways, pergolas, bridges, viewing decks and even platforms that cantilever over the stream. My children were excited with this "adventure trail" where the 3G Homes or "villas by the creek" are spread alongside.

There will only be 18 villas with a choice of 10 lovely designs, each to be built on one-acre bungalow lots in an enclave of Merbok Spring Precinct called Merbok Creek. This is a green, peaceful and undulating double-gated area that can only be accessed after clearing the watchful eyes of Nepalese guards at Leisure Farm's main entrance (who dutifully stamp their feet and salute) and later, by using a transponder to pass through a second automatic gate.

The asking prices of The Pavilion Villa and The Loft Villa show-units, inclusive of furnishing and interior design work are RM6.12 million and RM6.57 million respectively. For foreigners especially the many Singaporeans who have made the resort their second home, the price tags are especially appealing considering that it costs between S\$10 million

and S\$20 (RM24 million to RM48 million) for what is termed a Good Class Bungalow or GCB on the island republic, even though it wouldn't come with Leisure Farm's full-fledged resort features and facilities.

The Pavilion Villa's 10,206sq ft of built-up space (half contained in two blocks and half external) and 35,095sq ft land area allow for generous use of space. For privacy, on the top floor of a two-storey block occupying 1,400sq ft is the large master bedroom and walk-in wardrobe separated by a private atrium garden, a hallway, bathroom with jacuzzi and balcony while in a single-storey block are three other bedrooms with a cosy family area for the children and probably grandparents.

The two blocks are linked by a long corridor that also separates the 1,438sq ft lap pool and 1,389sq ft reflection pool/fish pond, all surrounded by a pool beach. It is indeed a large house (six bedrooms, all with attached bathrooms including a guest room) and is ideal for three-generation families. A spacious family hall in the main block can be turned into a library-cum-study.

With top-notch security (including a home alarm system with panic buttons) and the constant presence of guards, we felt totally safe spending two nights in the sprawling Pavilion Villa. Designed for airy living and to invite the outdoors inside, it has been designed like a glass house, with most of its "walls" made of tall toughened glass panels and sliding glass doors with blinds that allow for optimum natural lighting and ventilation.

The living room flows into the dining and dry kitchen area, which looks quite majestic with its double volume ceiling. The four baths have alfresco-style shower areas that permit occupants to look up to the sky but without being seen.



The Loft Villa.

Similarly, The Loft Villa (with six bedrooms and six baths) featuring 9,000sq ft of built-up area on 41,106sq ft of land also has plenty of windows and glass panels. Its segregated domains for private, semi-private, guest and loft living are connected as a home through the common view of the lap pool in the centre.

A stand-alone two-level section has been turned into a music room with a grand piano on the ground floor while on the upper deck is an office studio - which can also be used as

gym, play area or a small banquet hall for private parties.

The master bedroom and bathroom with jacuzzi is smaller than The Pavilion but at over 800sq ft, the space is large enough for couples to literally walk around.

Mulpha land & properties division's general manager Ronn Yong, the resort's "architect maestro and mastermind" said the 3G Homes concept was conceived four years ago.

"The 3G villas have sunken jacuzzis, lots of landscaping, indoor atriums and courtyards and a boardwalk leading to the canal," he pointed out. "Some of the villas will also have a boat-deck extending from the master bedroom."

Yong added that quality is assured as construction work will be guided and assessed by Conquas, the Singaporean Construction Quality Assessment System.

The 3G Homes will be previewed during the sales relaunch of the resort's bungalow lots and Bayou Water Village houses at Westin Kuala Lumpur on Sept 5 and 6.

A special 10 per cent rebate plus an Interior Design package worth RM80,000 awaits Malaysians purchasing a Unit in Bayou Water Village.

S.C. Cheah is a veteran journalist with his ears and eyes fixed on the property scene. If there are projects you want him to see, email him at sccheah.nstproperty@gmail.com



The Pavilion Villa.



The separate two-storey building can accommodate an office studio on the upper floor.



The master bedroom comes with a private atrium garden.

Major extension for Bale Club



Mulpha's Mokhtar and his team strive to ensure the needs of all residents are met.



The Bayou Water Village precinct.



Puteri Harbour nearby puts Danga Bay a short speedboat ride away.



The creek has been carved into a picturesque work of art.

There's good news for residents of Leisure Farm Resort! The Bale Equestrian and Country Club, the resort's main clubhouse will be undergoing a major "green" expansion and facelift to add close to 40,000sq ft of space to its current 18,000sq ft.

Mulpha International Bhd general manager (land & properties division) Ronn Yong said the addition will accommodate a new conference hall with a seating capacity for 360 people and another three detachable meeting rooms each capable of holding 100.

There will also be a new kitchen with modern dining facilities to cater to bigger conferences and weddings.

"This is in line with our plans to turn the resort into a venue for meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE)," he said, adding that a spa hotel with villa and suite chalets on a hillside overlooking a mature orchard and mangrove reserve will be built for the MICE group as well as to complement its existing resort stay packages.

"The expansion (at the Bale) is also

In anticipation of the resort's increasing population, which is why we are increasing the recreational facilities to include three indoor badminton courts, two squash courts, four tennis courts, convenience stores, a water-stage reflective pond, water lily and koi ponds, a sunken lounge, 25m lap-pool, children's forest wading pool, forest court with rainwater aquarium, clinic, a children's nursery and computer centre, full gym, changing rooms with saunas and four multi-function rooms - Yoga dance studio, music room, children library and children art centre.

"The new extension is scheduled for completion in a year."

The clubhouse's current facilities include a dining area that can sit up to 150 people, a bar lounge, conference facilities for 50 people, swimming pool, gym, library, children's room and a karaoke room. There is also a beach lagoon pool with jacuzzi and sunken bar.

In 2005, the Malaysian chapter of the International Real Estate Federation (Fiabci) gave the Bale Equestrian and Country Club top honours, which led

to it being a finalist in the international Fiabci Prix d'Excellence Award - an annual competition to find the world's best projects.

The pride of the club is its 72-stable equestrian and riding facility that comes with a 20-acre multi-purpose field in front of a regal grandstand.

The resort, particularly the clubhouse and its uniquely designed conical shaped thatched roofs, is "very popular with foreigners - especially Singaporeans," said Yong.

On response from buyers for Leisure Farm's residential units, he said "all our 16 showhouses ranging from 4,000sq ft to 14,000sq ft have been sold to local and foreign investors".

"They got very good deals ... a businessman from Sarawak bought one of the show-bungalows and later, three more adjacent bungalow plots for his children."

Meanwhile, Leisure Farm's property manager Mokhtar Singh and his dedicated team are constantly on their toes giving their best to ensure that the needs of all residents and guests are met round the clock.

Indeed, it is not easy maintain-

ing in tip-top condition a 1,765-acre freehold resort that people from 35 countries have chosen as their homes, be it permanent, for retirement or as a getaway.

During my stay there, I met a Singaporean resident who owns two mansions and has two luxury cars including a Rolls Royce. He is planning to sell his second property for RM6.8 million!

Mokhtar said it is common for foreigners as well as locals to own several houses in the resort, which also contains the 280-acre, 36-hole championship Portesia Golf & Country Club.

Mulpha property division's senior sales & marketing manager Koh Boon Teng said with the progress of Iskandar Malaysia and the expected opening of Singapore's two Integrated Resorts - one in Marina South by Las Vegas Sands and the other on Sentosa Island by Resort World - by 2010, Leisure Farm is poised to become a very attractive investment destination, especially among foreigners looking for second homes in this part of the world.

"We are 15 minutes from the Johor

Baru-Singapore Second Link and 30 minutes to the city state's two new resort destinations," he said.

Furthermore, as Leisure Farm Resort sits within Iskandar Malaysia, property values are expected to continue escalating as major developments and infrastructure come on-stream.

These include the 688-acre Puteri Harbour, an integrated waterfront and 76-berth marina development that commenced operations in January this year; the Johor State New Administrative Centre being occupied by state and government offices; and Medini, slated to be a world-class financial hub.

Other landmarks near Leisure Farm are the proposed RM750 million Legoland theme park and RM100 million Newcastle University Medical Faculty which are expected to be ready in two years time.

Neighbouring upmarket developments such as SP Setia's Setia Eco Gardens, UEM Land's East Ledang and Gamuda Land's Horizon Hills will further enhance the vicinity's overall image and add value to properties there. - SC Cheah