

# Scaling new heights

The Selangor Aviation Show (SAS) 2024 lands in September, promising to bring prime business deals, technological advancements, and more visitors to the state and elevate it as the aviation hub of Asean. At the same time, Selangor's recently-conferred high-income status by the World Bank proves its strong economic fundamentals, providing reassurance to investors. The state is also addressing food security through strategic agricultural developments and the establishment of a RM40 million food bank. Together, these efforts highlight Selangor's resilience across all sectors and its deep commitment to progress.





# Keeping the momentum

Selangor's strong fundamentals will attract investors but it must not stray from its plans, says economist

BY YASMIN RAMLAN

**S**ELANGOR has recently been recognised as a high-income state by the World Bank, a significant milestone that reflects the Selangor government's effective governance and strategic planning.

According to Apurva Sanghi, the World Bank's lead economist for Malaysia, Selangor has surpassed the high-income threshold with a gross national income (GNI) per capita of US\$14,291 (approximately RM63,000). This accomplishment not only nods to Selangor's robust economic framework but also highlights the state's commitment to fostering an environment conducive to growth and innovation.

The announcement is a testament to Selangor's resilience and adaptability, especially in the face of challenges such as the Covid-19 pandemic and economic fluctuations.

Under the leadership of Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari, the state has implemented comprehensive development initiatives that span various sectors, including manufacturing and services, which are crucial for sustaining the economic momentum.

Speaking to *Selangor Journal*, Apurva projected that Selangor's high-income status reflects its strong economic fundamentals that will attract firms and investment.

He explained that the World Bank revises its income thresholds annually to account for inflation and economic conditions.

"Hence, reaching high-income status does

not automatically bring immediate changes to Selangor.

"Rather, we view it as a recognition of a reasonably well-run economy with strong fundamentals, and it is a good signal for Selangor to send to investors," he said.

However, he emphasised that it remains essential that Selangor stays on its trajectory of modernising its investment ecosystem. This includes, for example, automating the incentive regime and simplifying the investment promotion network.

"Of course, Selangor is not alone in this journey. Providing inputs and coordinating with the Federal level and its policies in a synergistic manner is also important," he said.

## QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

Aside from Selangor, four other states have exceeded the minimum threshold for GNI per capita. They are Kuala Lumpur (US\$29,967/RM130,500), Labuan (US\$19,117/RM83,200), Penang (US\$16,600/RM72,200), and Sarawak (US\$16,560/RM72,100).

Kelantan, Perlis, and Kedah remained the bottom three with GNI per capita of US\$3,850/RM16,700, US\$5,490/RM23,900, and US\$6,027/RM26,200, respectively.

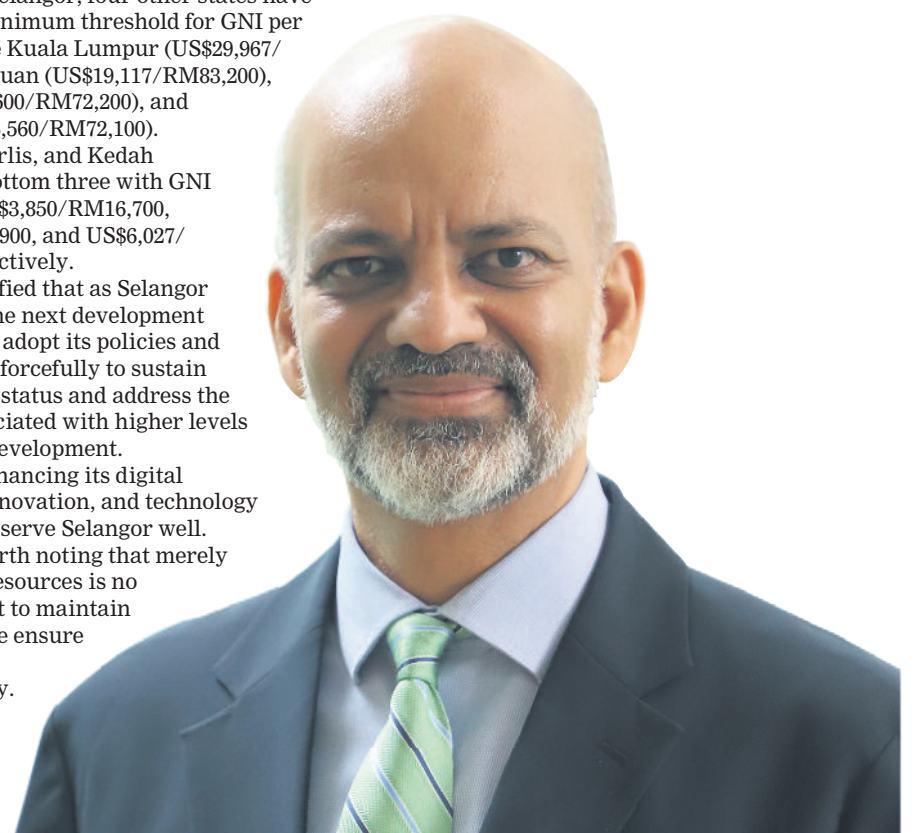
Apurva clarified that as Selangor advances into the next development phase, it should adopt its policies and strategies more forcefully to sustain its high-income status and address the challenges associated with higher levels of income and development.

"Notably, enhancing its digital connectivity, innovation, and technology adoption would serve Selangor well.

"It is also worth noting that merely accumulating resources is no longer sufficient to maintain growth, let alone ensure its benefits are shared equitably.

"A sustained increase in private investment, coupled

**'Our global experience shows that sustaining high-income status requires a transition to more knowledge-intensive growth'**



with productivity improvements, will be necessary to maintain a sustainable economic growth trajectory. It is more about quality of growth than quantity of growth,” he said.

Congratulating Selangor on its achievement, Apurva highlighted that only a handful of Malaysian states and Federal Territories have crossed the high-income threshold. Therefore, achieving high-income status is a key milestone for Selangor.

“Our global experience shows that sustaining high-income status requires a transition to more knowledge-intensive and productivity-driven growth, closer to the technological frontier, as well as more inclusivity and sustainability,” he said.

He also pointed out an example of a positive development in Selangor — the recently launched integrated circuit (IC) design park.

If implemented well, Apurva said, it will be capable of attracting high-quality investment, fostering innovation, and creating high-value jobs.

### BOOSTING WORKER PRODUCTIVITY

Apurva said that Selangor’s new status has led to a widening of absolute income gaps.

He explained that this situation is not surprising because, as an economy grows and household incomes rise, the income gap between the rich and poor typically widens.

This is largely because wealthier households start from a higher base, resulting in greater absolute income gains.

“For example, a 10 per cent increase in income for a household earning RM2,000 versus RM10,000 will result in a RM8,800 gap between both households, which is larger compared to the RM8,000 gap prior to the increase.

“However, a singular focus on eliminating absolute income gaps could undercut potential income growth across the income spectrum,” he said.

Apurva further noted that a more effective measure is relative income inequality. In Selangor, this has improved between 2019 and 2022, as evidenced by a decrease in the GNI coefficient from 0.393 to 0.361 during this period.

For reference, the GNI coefficient measures income inequality, with a lower value indicating reduced inequality.

“So incomes of low-income households in Selangor can still catch up to higher-income households as long as relative income inequality declines.

“Relative income inequality refers to the average disproportionality of income. If the income of the poor grows faster than that of the rich, relative income inequality decreases.

“It should be possible to accelerate the ‘catch-up’ process through improving access to the B40 to more remunerative employment.

“Therefore, even if absolute income gaps increase, those gaps will diminish in importance as the B40’s base effect grows and their share of total income increases,” he said.

Recognising that a high-income status doesn’t always correspond with low poverty rates, he recommends that Selangor implement strategies to tackle existing poverty.

These include boosting labour incomes and productivity and addressing human capital gaps at an early stage.

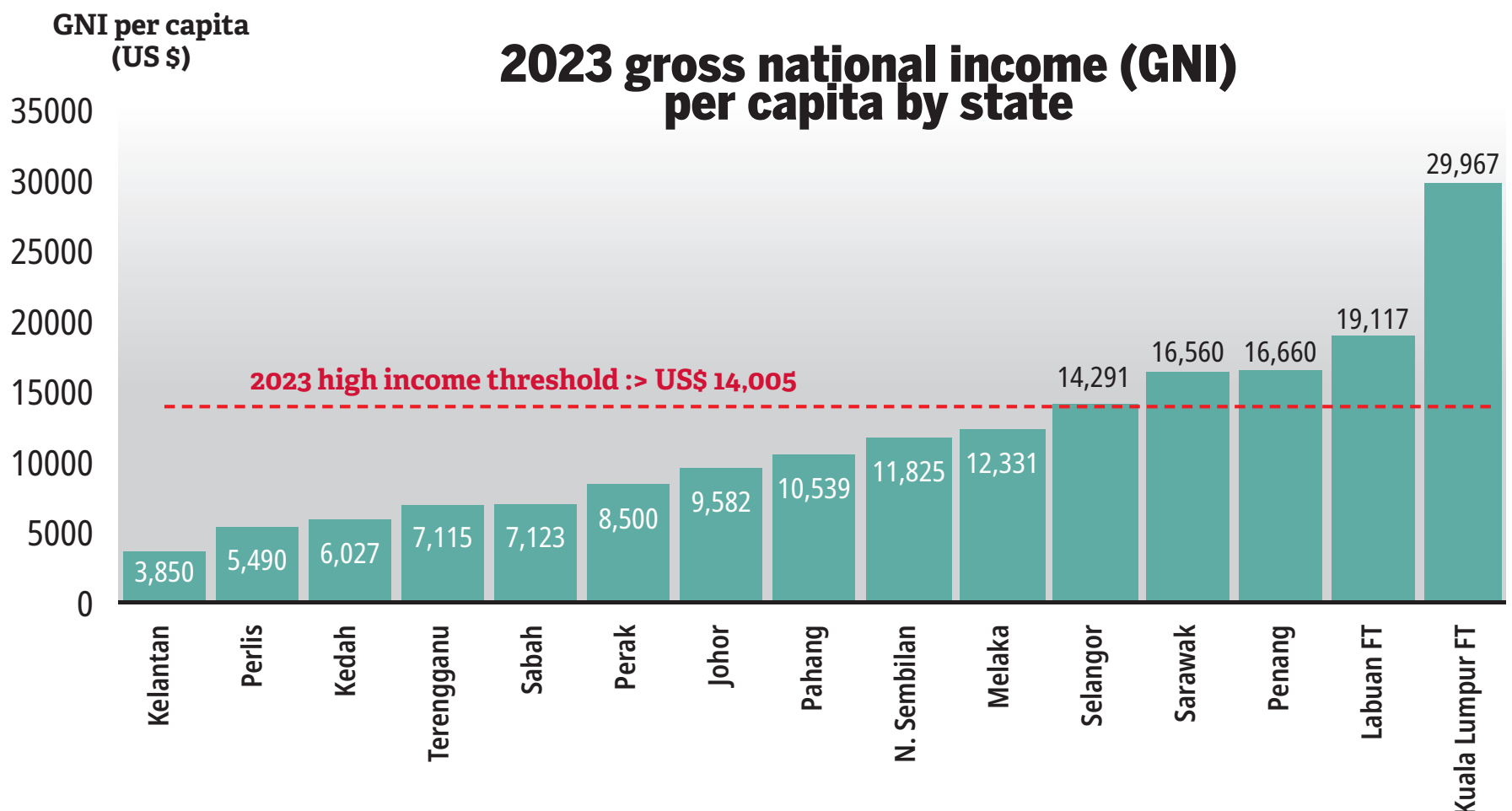
“Higher labour incomes through greater worker productivity could be achieved via investment policy to attract investments in new and existing enterprises that will create more skilled jobs, especially high value-added jobs in the services sector.

“It is crucial that the new progressive wage policy, when it applies to Selangor, is backed by improvements in productivity. Meanwhile, human capital gaps can be addressed earlier in the life cycle,” he said.

Additionally, he said adequate healthcare, including antenatal care and early childhood education, provides the foundation for a productive life and is far more effective than remedial measures later in life.

“Paying explicit attention to these aspects can only further strengthen Selangor’s economic and societal fundamentals. Again, working closely with the Federal level will be important,” he said.

**‘A sustained increase in private investment, coupled with productivity improvements, will be necessary to maintain a sustainable economic growth trajectory. It is more about quality of growth than quantity of growth’**



Source World Bank Malaysia staff calculations based on Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM)'s 2023 state-level GDP per capita data [released 2 July 2024]

# Planting seeds of sustenance

The state is leveraging technology to build a food bank and reduce its reliance on imports

BY DANIAL DZULKIFLY PHOTO BY NUR ADIBAH AHMAD IZAM

**S**ELANGOR is taking decisive action to enhance its commitment to food security by developing the Kuala Selangor and Hulu Selangor development zones.

State executive councillor for infrastructure and agriculture Izham Hashim said this ambitious project is designed to create a robust food supply system for the state, including a food bank capable of maintaining up to three months of reserves.

He said this would address lessons learned during the Covid-19 pandemic, when global and regional disruptions exacerbated food supply challenges.

According to Izham, the new development zones will focus exclusively on agricultural projects to ensure the state has adequate essential food reserves and stabilise market supply during shortages.

“Our goal is to make Selangor more self-reliant in terms of food supplies. The existing Smart Selangor Agro Park (SSAP) and Selangor food bank initiatives are central to this strategy,” he said in a recent interview with *Selangor Journal*.

SSAP is planned as an aquaculture hub in Selangor and will span approximately 1,000 acres in Sungai Asam Jawa, Kuala Selangor.

It will focus on organic tiger prawn and white prawn farming to reduce the state’s dependence on external sources for these products.

Additionally, the state will develop a food bank or stockpile with a budget of RM40 million. This was announced in November last year as part of the 2024 Selangor Budget.

The 10-acre facility in Kuala Selangor will store essential food items such as rice, chicken, and other vital protein and carbohydrate sources.

“Initially, we plan to store between 4,000 and 5,000 tonnes of rice, aiming to cover up to three months of Selangor’s needs,” said Izham.

He stated that the project will begin by meeting at least 15 per cent of the state’s monthly demand.

## TACKLING LEGAL ISSUES

Izham said that these projects are expected to commence early next year as the state addresses on-the-ground challenges in the new development area.

These issues include harmonising land ownership and dealing with abandoned lands with unclear legal claims.

“There are also trespassing issues on these lands due to unclear ownership. These are among the problems we aim to resolve,” he said.

Plans to develop the Kuala Selangor and Hulu Selangor Development Zone were first announced by Menteri Besar Dato’ Seri Amirudin Shari during the tabling of the First Selangor Plan’s (RS-1) mid-term review early in July.

Amirudin had said that the zone

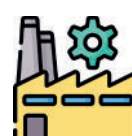
## RS-1 Strategic Theme 1: STRENGTHENING THE ECONOMY

9 Focus sectors, 3 Geography-based developments, 4 Comprehensive key strategies  
93 Projects/Programmes/Initiatives



### SERVICES

- Logistics: Boosting capacity to meet industrial demands, positioning Selangor as logistics leader
- Tourism: Increasing number of tourists and tourist spending in Selangor
- Digital Economy: Boosting startups/unicorns, digitising SMEs, and enhancing telecom infrastructure for business growth



### MANUFACTURING

- Aerospace: Positioning Selangor as the top aerospace investment hub in Asia Pacific
- Automotive: Positioning Selangor as a hub for automotive manufacturing and services
- E&E and M&E: Boosting foreign and domestic investments in E&E and M&E sectors, attracting high-value segments
- Halal Industry: Making Selangor a global halal hub, meeting international demand, and enhancing the industry ecosystem
- Life Sciences: Establishing Selangor as a regional life sciences hub for pharmaceuticals, biotech, medical devices, and bio-based products



### AGRICULTURE

Agrotechnology: Establishing Selangor as a top producer of high-value crops using IR4.0



### GEOGRAPHY-BASED DEVELOPMENT

- Sabda
- Idriss
- ZPE SMG
- Kuala Selangor and Hulu Selangor development zones



### OTHER PROJECTS

- Shah Alam Sports Complex

Source: First Selangor Plan 2021–2025 mid-term review report

would be developed as an agriculture and aquaculture hub, with developments using modern technologies, including automation, sensors for plant monitoring, and hydroponic or aeroponic techniques, to increase productivity and efficiency in the agriculture sector.

It is Selangor’s fourth regional development plan, after the Sabak Bernam Development Area (Sabda), the Integrated Development Region in South Selangor (Idriss), and the Selangor Maritime Gateway Economic Development Zone (ZPE SMG).

Izham stated that the new development zone differs from the other projects as it is specifically focused on ensuring food security for the state.

“There will be investment opportunities for more agricultural projects in the new zone. But before we officially open it (for private investments), we are focusing on resolving existing issues first,” he said.

To ensure the zone’s objectives are met, the state also fosters strategic partnerships for the food bank’s smooth operation.

“Our partners will store essential items at their locations, and the state government will conduct regular audits to mitigate risks such as those experienced during the pandemic or sudden spikes in food prices,” he said.

## MORE LAND FOR FARMING

Izham also revealed that the state is formulating a five-year agriculture plan from 2025 to 2030 to reduce reliance on food imports.

This plan is expected to be rolled out next year.

Other agricultural developments in the state include a corn farm in Tanjung Sepat, which is meant to be used for poultry farming and the expansion of agricultural lands across Selangor.

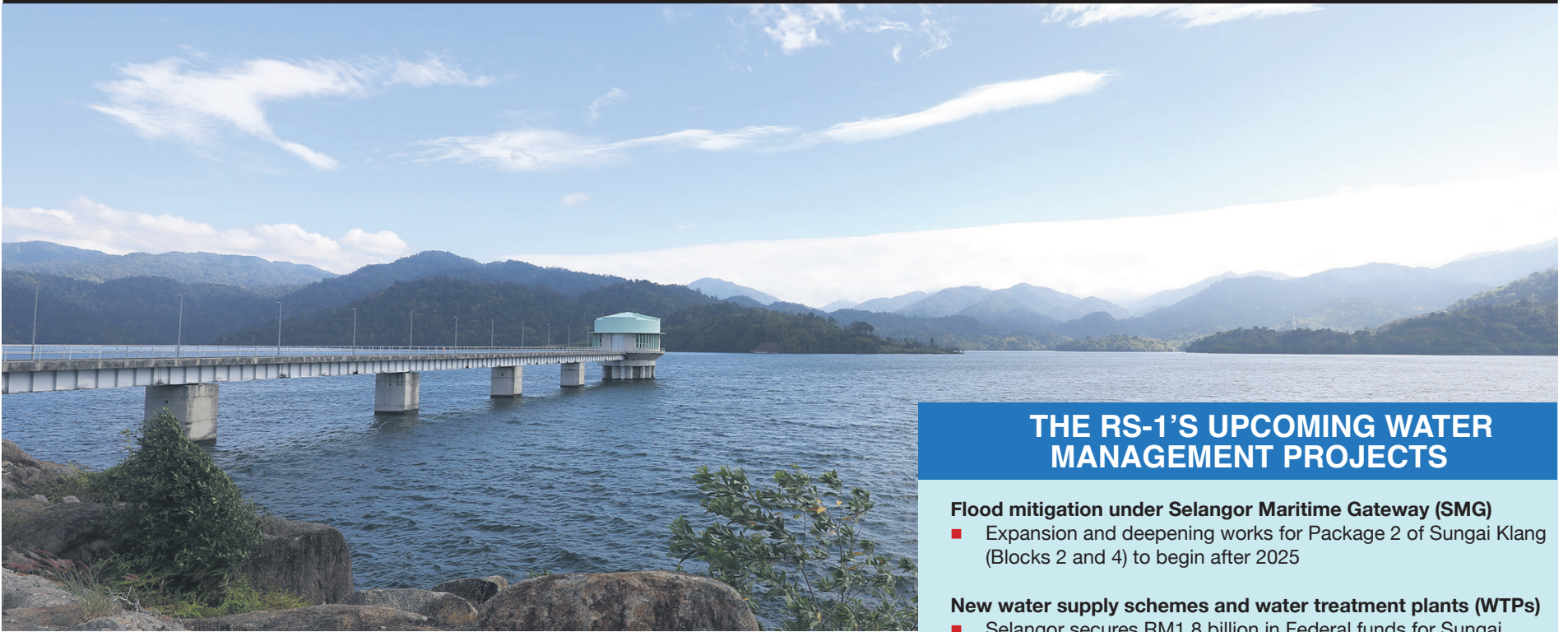
“We are increasing the land area for these projects to over 500 acres, with significant portions in Kuala Langat, Hulu Selangor, and Rawang.”

Selangor is also in discussion with other states, including Pahang, Sabah and Sarawak, to allow them to replicate its corn farming initiative, strengthening food security across the country.

On July 24, Izham said that Selangor would collaborate with other states to expand the production of high-quality grain corn and that the state government is currently identifying suitable land for this purpose.

Selangor successfully cultivated its inaugural batch of grain corn on January 21, with a total of 118 metric tonnes of the crop harvested from 42 acres of land at a plantation in Kuala Langat.





# The big H<sup>2</sup>O plan

Selangor is making bold changes to how water is used, managed, and protected in the Klang Valley

BY DANIAL DZULKIFLY

PHOTO BY REMY ARIFIN

THE Selangor government is set to launch several transformative initiatives as part of a broader strategy to enhance the control and management of its water assets and mitigate flood incidents in the Klang Valley.

These include the formation of a first-of-its-kind state water commission to oversee and manage all water-related matters, including treated, raw and sewage water, and the proposal for a RM5 billion ‘water highway’.

According to state executive councillor for infrastructure and agriculture Izham Hashim, plans are in place to elevate the state’s Raw Water Security Scheme (SJAM) committee — which oversees the supply of treated water in Selangor — to the Selangor Water Commission (SAS).

Izham noted that SAS would be the first state water commission in the country to manage all aspects of water-related issues under one administration.

The state is also considering taking over the Selangor chapter of the national sewerage company, Indah Water Konsortium (IWK) Sdn Bhd, as part of this initiative, he said.

If done, this move would consolidate all water management authorities, including the Selangor Water Management Authority (Luas), Pengurusan Air Selangor Sdn Bhd (Air Selangor) and potentially IWK Selangor, under the SAS’s purview.

However, he did not provide a definitive timeline for when the move will be completed.

“Essentially, the state needs a powerful legal framework to protect its water sources. That is why we are also looking at possibly taking over IWK Selangor.

“SAS will allow for more integrated management of water assets in the state. To date, no other state has undertaken this,” he said in a recent interview with *Selangor Journal*.

Luas, established under the Selangor Waters

Management Authority Enactment 1999, is the state agency responsible for water resource management in Selangor. It oversees river basins, groundwater, surface water, lakes, ponds, former mining pools, and coastal areas through Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) and Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) approaches.

Air Selangor, Malaysia’s largest water services provider, supplies clean, treated water to 9.3 million consumers in Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, and Putrajaya. It operates 34 water treatment plants across 11 regions in the Klang Valley.

Izham stated that SAS would also not conflict with the National Water Services Commission (SPAN), pointing out that water management remains a state matter.

He also noted that SPAN does not manage sewage water, highlighting the unique role SAS would play upon its establishment.

He said the commission is already part of the state’s comprehensive water management plan, which includes short-, medium-, and long-term planning of water assets and flood mitigation strategies.

Currently, the SJAM committee, which consists of inter-agency and local authority cooperation, is responsible for managing water resources in the state, including water-related infrastructure projects.

Four main projects under SJAM involve the supply, installation, testing, and commissioning of pumping systems and related works at various sites.

They are the Hybrid Off-River Augmentation System (Horas) 600 in Bestari Jaya, Kuala Selangor (Package A); Rantau Panjang water treatment plant (WTP) in Kuala Selangor (Package B); Sungai Selangor Phases 1, 2 and 3 WTP in Bestari Jaya (Package C); and Sungai Semenyih WTP in Jenderam Hilir (Package D).

Izham assured that the projects would be completed in their entirety by October this year and that the state

is working on connecting all major water sources, such as rivers and ponds, as part of its efforts to ensure water security.

## WATER HIGHWAY

On the RM5 billion water highway, Izham said the state has proposed the project — which would connect waterways in Kuala Lumpur directly to Sungai Klang and flow right into the sea — to the Federal government.

While the finer details are still being deliberated, the idea is for the highway, similar to an aqueduct or a tunnel, to channel excess water from Kuala Lumpur straight to the sea.

The highway will consist of several major drop points, primarily in lowlands in the valley that are prone to flooding.

“The idea is to channel all the water collected in Kuala Lumpur and bring it straight to the sea so it wouldn’t cause floods along the major rivers in the Klang Valley.

“So, if there is any abnormality in water levels, such as those caused by rainfall, it would carry the water straight to the sea,” he said.

Izham said the water highway, which is expected to have a diameter of at least eight to nine metres, will help resolve long-standing flooding issues in Kuala Lumpur and the Klang Valley.

“We could also use the highway to store excess water in reservoirs near the sea, which could be utilised during emergencies such as droughts.”

The proposal, Izham said, has been presented to Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof, who is also the Energy Transition and Water Transformation Minister.

“We are also pushing the proposal to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim. This project is another game changer, but it must be executed correctly,” he said.

## THE RS-1’S UPCOMING WATER MANAGEMENT PROJECTS

### Flood mitigation under Selangor Maritime Gateway (SMG)

- Expansion and deepening works for Package 2 of Sungai Klang (Blocks 2 and 4) to begin after 2025

### New water supply schemes and water treatment plants (WTPs)

- Selangor secures RM1.8 billion in Federal funds for Sungai Rasau WTP Phase 1, with Pengurusan Air Selangor Sdn Bhd investing another RM3.4 billion.
- The project will produce 1,400 litres of clean water daily

### Study on integrated water resources management

- Activities under the Sungai Klang Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) Plan kicks off in 2024

### Non-revenue water (NRW) reduction

- 440 km of pipes scheduled for replacement by 2025
- The NRW reduction target set at 27.5 per cent by 2025

### Water conservation

- Some 20 programmes to roll out annually to promote sustainable and efficient water use

### Polluter Pays Principle and Zero Discharge Policy

- New charges for waste and pollutant discharge aimed to rehabilitate water sources and hold polluters accountable

Source: First Selangor Plan 2021–2025 mid-term review report

# The green balancing act

Although there are new laws to keep the state's errant factories in check, creating environmental awareness is still the best way forward

BY YASMIN RAMLAN

**S**ELANGOR, Malaysia's most populous and economically-successful state, faces significant environmental challenges as it continues to rely heavily on its industrial sectors for growth.

Rapid urbanisation and industrialisation have led to increased effluent discharge, which poses serious risks to the state's water quality and overall ecological health.

In addressing water pollution in the state, the Selangor government developed the Raw Water Security Scheme (SJAM) as a proactive measure to ensure a continuous supply of clean water to its residents.

The initiative aims to prevent disruptions to water treatment plants (WTPs) during incidents of raw water pollution, which have historically affected the state's water supply. Its introduction is motivated by pollution prevention, infrastructure development, response time improvement, and meeting operational timelines. The project is expected to be fully operational by October.

In response to these pressing concerns, the Selangor government has also introduced the Zero Discharge Policy (ZDP) and the Polluters Pay Principle (PPP) policy. The ZDP aims to eliminate the discharge of untreated wastewater into the environment, promoting sustainable practices among industries, whereas the PPP policy holds polluters accountable for the environmental damage they cause, ensuring they bear cleanup and restoration costs.

Together, these policies represent a proactive approach to safeguarding Selangor's natural resources while balancing economic development and environmental sustainability. As the state addresses the issues of industrial growth and environmental protection, these initiatives are crucial for fostering a sustainable future for its residents.

According to state executive councillor for public health and environment Jamaliah Jamaluddin, the policies are not only new to Selangor but also the first of its kind in Malaysia. As a result, the state government is actively conducting and engaging with stakeholders to ensure its effective implementation.

She stated that a series of public announcements and town hall sessions have been arranged, some of which have been conducted with stakeholders such as the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM) and the Real Estate and Housing Developers' Association (Rehda) Malaysia.

"We will also be having a focused-group discussion with relevant stakeholders on September 19 to educate businesses about the new ZDP and PPP," she told *Selangor Journal* in a recent interview.

Expressing her concern regarding challenges in educating the industrial players on the policies' impact, including operational costs, she emphasised the importance of adopting a forward-thinking approach among industrial players and



stakeholders.

"What's most important is ensuring the safety and health of our environment around us so that the businesses can continue.

"And also, we should encourage business owners and industrial players to be creative on how not to disturb the environment (minimising their environmental impact)," she said, suggesting that they consider strategies for recycling the effluent they produce.

The ZDP in Selangor was recently implemented following its approval by the Selangor Economic Action Council in May 2024. This policy is part of a broader strategy to enhance water quality management and protect the state's rivers, which are crucial for supplying raw water to residents.

Alongside the ZDP, the PPP will also be enforced, requiring industries to pay fees based on effluent discharges exceeding regulated limits.

## NOT FOCUSING ON PUNISHMENTS

Jamaliah believes that the state government is approaching the policy cautiously, pointing out that it is currently prioritising awareness rather than strict enforcement.

"Until now, I don't believe we've enforced this policy too harshly, and there is still ongoing awareness.

"Next year, as certain licences and permits come up for renewal, we will use that opportunity as a platform to further inform and engage with the public," she said.

Jamaliah stated that for those who feel they need more engagement, sessions will be provided to help them understand the necessity of these measures to protect the rivers and water resources in the state.

"If not addressed, every time we face issues related to water pollution, we will feel unsafe. What's important for the public to understand is that this policy isn't about imposing charges, the objective is not to generate revenue but to ensure safety," she said.

Jamaliah emphasised the policy's importance, noting that while Selangor contributes the largest share to the nation's gross domestic product (GDP), the state's focus on the industrial sector

requires a long-term focus to ensure environmental sustainability.

Under the ZDP, businesses will be charged fees based on the volume of effluents they discharge, with rates ranging from RM0.10 to RM0.20 per cubic metre, depending on the discharge volume. The more effluent discharged, the higher the fee, incentivising industries to reduce their wastewater output.

## TREADING ON NEW GROUND

The Selangor Water Management Board (Luas) will implement the ZDP by enforcing these regulations and the Notification of Return Water Charges into Any Water Source, which was gazetted on August 8.

The Licensing Regulations for Return Water Discharges and the Entry or Release of Waste Materials and Pollutants (Selangor) (2024) related to the implementation of the ZDP were formulated and gazetted on June 20 this year under the authority of the Luas Enactment 1999.

"This policy was initiated by Luas, which now has the authority to conduct reviews and inspections. Luas will play the main role in implementing the ZDP and PPP initiatives," she said.

Jamaliah said the agency will manage the funds collected, with plans to address issues related to Selangor's rivers.

"These plans, along with Luas' annual budget, will be presented at a board meeting and chaired by Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari, focusing on river conservation projects and related initiatives," she said.

When asked about the challenges she anticipates in implementing the policies, Jamaliah acknowledged that occasional hiccups are expected since these measures are new and lack references.

"I foresee challenges because it's the first time this has been introduced, and no one has heard of it. I believe that Luas should focus more on publicity and awareness, as I see this as the main challenge, aside from procedural hurdles," she said.

However, she added that while it won't be perfect, there will be room for improvement.

# Racing to upskill

Selangor is working fast to bridge its AI talent gap and create a sustainable workforce that is industry ready

BY YASMIN RAMLAN

As more industries and companies adopt artificial intelligence (AI) in their daily operations, the demand for a tech-savvy workforce has never been higher. This, however, has led to many cases of talent mismatches — discrepancies between what employers expect and the actual abilities of their workers.

This is where the Selangor Digital School's AI Nusantara comes in.

The country's first AI research institute is taking the lead in bridging Selangor's digital talent gap by providing its students with the right training and equipping them with what the industry needs.

It is well aware of the existing scarcity of professionals who can meet market demand. It also understands that many fresh graduates lose out on AI engineering jobs simply because they don't make the cut.

AI Nusantara's general manager, Angel Low, said that when the institution was established in 2023, it noticed many companies were hiring AI engineers but specifically sought those with experience.

"If you search on Google right now, after a few scrolls, you'll see there aren't enough jobs available. When we spoke to companies about the positions they were offering, many were targeting experienced

engineers and not fresh graduates," she said in a recent interview with *Selangor Journal* at the Selangor Information Technology and Digital Economy Corporation's (Sidec) office, Shah Alam.

Previously, Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari had said that the country's digital economy sector needs at least 1.5 million digital talents. Today, the market has only about 50 per cent of that.

Based on data from the Statistics Department (DOSM), e-commerce revenue was recorded at RM1.09 trillion last year compared to RM675.4 billion in 2019, a 61.6 per cent rise, proving the importance of the digital economy to the national gross domestic product (GDP).

For AI Nusantara, Low said it is currently focused on developing job-ready AI talent to address immediate market needs while continuing its efforts in AI engineering programmes.

It foresees significant growth in the AI field over the next decade and is committed to nurturing a sustainable and adaptable AI workforce.

"Because of this, we've had to refocus our resources, with 70 per cent now directed towards training AI chip engineers rather than just AI model engineers. It's a significant shift, but we must adapt to market demands.

"I anticipate this trend will continue over the next few years, especially with

the influx of foreign semiconductor companies. This presents many opportunities for our fresh graduates, as these companies are open to hiring them," she said.

Low said companies must also adapt to the current situation, focusing on solutions that align with the latest trends, particularly in the semiconductor industry. This is especially relevant as Selangor recently launched Malaysia's first integrated circuit (IC) design park in August.

Therefore, AI Nusantara, in collaboration with the Selangor government and The Hive Southeast Asia, is pivotal in addressing the critical shortage of skilled talent in the digital economy.

Launched as an educational initiative under Sidec's Selangor Digital School, it aims to provide affordable and accredited digitalisation courses tailored to meet the evolving demands of the workforce.

## 2,000 TALENTS BY 2027

AI Nusantara targets to train 600 students in AI this year alone and integrate them into the industry through placements in tech companies. Low said it has ambitions to produce 2,000 AI talents by 2027.

Previously, AI Nusantara director

Yong Kai Ping, who is also Sidec's chief executive officer, said the institution will be upgraded to industrial college status and rebranded as the Malaysia Advanced Semiconductor and AI Institute (Masai).

Its programme comprises a 60-hour syllabus designed to augment the value of students' tertiary education.

Low said the key performance indicator (KPI) for AI Nusantara is the successful placement of students upon graduation.

She stated that the curriculum offered under AI Nusantara is highly adaptable, allowing it to work closely with over 100 industry partners "to identify specific skills, modules, and contents they want us to teach".

"We will be focusing on building and ensuring the success of our talent development initiatives.

"We think talent is the primary issue because talent has always been the main concern in every meeting we attend and every company we meet. They want to hire, but they can't find the right talent. That's why their operations cannot start," she said.

## COLLABORATION WITH UNIVERSITIES

AI Nusantara is currently collaborating with 16 universities, with supporting fresh graduates and addressing the needs of academic institutions that lack resources among its key initiatives.

"University lecturers typically emphasise teaching students the fundamentals, which is crucial.

"But we add value by offering advanced training, especially through access to expensive applications and large language models like Gemini. We package all of these and provide them to the students.

"This ensures that students have the opportunity to learn these technologies even before they enter the workforce."

Low said this initiative will be further expanded in September by bringing 30 lecturers from these universities to Taiwan for an upskilling programme aimed at enhancing their expertise.

She pointed out that after reviewing their curriculum vitae, it became clear that many lecturers face time constraints when it comes to upskilling.

Low added that in October, the institution will launch its first programme at the Selangor IC Design Park in collaboration with higher learning institutions to offer an upskilling programme for final-year graduates.

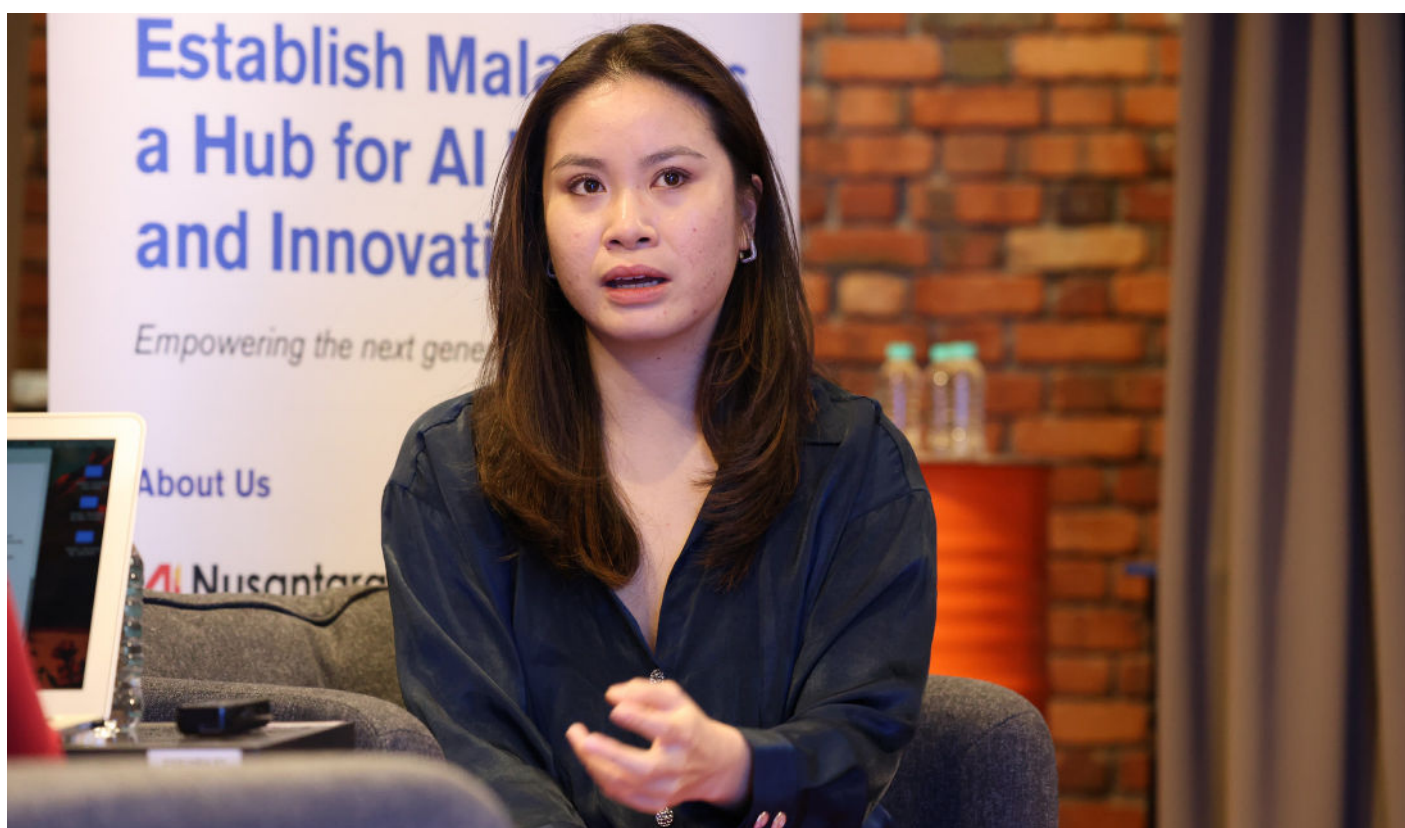
Sharing her own experience, Low, 27, described education as a luxury.

She recalled her time in university, when she was unaware of prestigious institutions like JP Morgan and the 'Big Four' consulting firms due to limited exposure to opportunities and knowledge.

Reflecting on this experience, she became passionate about advocating for education as a fundamental right rather than a privilege.

She was determined to break the cycle of inequality and inspire others to pursue knowledge, regardless of their background. She believed that everyone deserves access to quality education and the opportunity to succeed.

"If schools don't have tools like Synopsys and Cadence, how can they prepare to become IC design instructors? Ultimately, they might end up in a semiconductor manufacturing company as instructors without proper training," she said.



# Destination: Selangor!



No longer the new kid in town, the state's aviation show for 2024 will gather the region's best to forge new partnerships, seal deals, and explore possibilities to reshape the industry's landscape

BY DANIAL DZULKIFLY

**S**ELANGOR is poised to capitalise on its economic success and large talent pool to establish itself as the regional aerospace and aviation hub in Asean.

The state is gearing up to host the Selangor Aviation Show (SAS) 2024, anticipating increased participation from both domestic and international aviation companies, including those specialising in aircraft components, systems, materials, and maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) services.

Last year's SAS attracted 109 local and foreign companies that showcased cutting-edge designs and expertise. Valuable partnerships were formed when industry leaders such as Textron, Gulfstream, and Dassault Aviation took part.

The 2023 event facilitated the signing of 28 memoranda of understanding (MoUs) worth RM823 million, underscoring its significance as a key driver of economic growth.

It featured an impressive display of 49 static aircraft from leading aviation nations, such as the USA, Denmark, France, and Singapore.

With a considerable attendance of 19,217 visitors, many from outside the country, SAS secured its position as a top-tier aviation event in the region.

This year, Invest Selangor Bhd (Invest Selangor), the state's investment arm that hosts the airshow, expects to see higher numbers of trade and public visitors. Some 25,000 people from around the region are anticipated, with 20,000 registrations already secured two weeks before the event.

SAS 2024 is also expected to make more than RM1.3 billion in transactions, a significant jump from last year's potential trade value of RM823. This would stimulate the local economy and cement Selangor's reputation as a serious player in the aviation and aerospace sectors.

## A SPACE FOR FORUMS

Invest Selangor chief executive officer Dato' Hasan Azhari Idris said SAS 2024 would indeed play a crucial role in elevating the state's reputation as a premier aerospace hub, as it can attract global experts and showcase cutting-edge technology.

This year's air show will be held from Sept 12 to 14 at the SkyPark Regional Aviation Centre, Subang.

"The event will not only demonstrate Selangor's progress but also unite key industry figures, facilitate major transactions, and engage a diverse audience within the aerospace community," he said in a recent interview with *Selangor Journal*.

Hasan said that in addition to its role as a trade platform, SAS will also gather key stakeholders in the aviation sector to discuss the industry's challenges and work towards sustainable solutions.

The event will feature 23 tailored sessions consisting of forums and talks addressing topics such as sustainability in the aviation industry, aviation safety, business aviation, general aviation supply chain, sports aviation regulations, and the future of the space industry.

"SAS 2024 will feature forums and talks on regulatory changes and compliance best practices, assisting participants in staying informed and effectively navigating the regulatory landscape.

"On top of that, the event will address the latest issues in space exploration, drone technology, and the future of aviation while also focusing on themes of women and youth empowerment within the industry," Hasan said.

"It will also highlight innovations in sustainable aviation practices and technologies, promoting the adoption of environmentally friendly solutions and supporting the industry's efforts to reduce its ecological footprint," he said.

Forums aside, visitors to the airshow will be treated to the latest advancements in aviation technology, such as electric and hybrid aircraft, alternative fuels, and energy-efficient systems.

"Collectively, these elements will spotlight the industry's commitment to a greener future," said Hasan.



**'The event will not only demonstrate Selangor's progress but also unite key industry figures, facilitate major transactions, and engage a diverse audience within the aerospace community'**



## SOMETHING FOR ALL

Like previous years, the event will include a dedicated career fair where industry leaders can connect with emerging talent, address workforce shortages, and invest in the next generation of aviation professionals.

Women empowerment-themed activities, as well as child-friendly games such as paper plane contests, will also be held to ensure maximum participation from the crowd.

On the evening of Sept 12, SAS 2024 will host the inaugural Women in Aviation Awards ceremony in collaboration with Women in Aviation Asia (WiAA) and Women@MAG (Malaysia Aviation Group).

Invest Selangor has arranged for parking at Stadium Shah Alam with a free shuttle service to the event area to facilitate easier public access to the location. MyCar, SAS's official e-hailing partner, is also offering a RM2 discount for attendees.

The event area will feature a premium café, a variety of food and beverage vendors, a musalla, portable toilets, and facilities for wheelchairs and baby strollers to ensure accessibility and comfort.

## BEING FUTURE-FORWARD

Tying in with SAS's commitment to the aviation industry are the broader objectives of the Selangor Aerospace Action Plan (SAAP), which align with the Malaysian Aerospace Industry Blueprint (MAIB) 2015-2030.

"Our goal is to support the Malaysian Aerospace Industry Blueprint, which envisions Malaysia as Southeast Asia's number one aerospace nation by 2030," said Hasan.

"The event will also attract businesses focused on aerospace technology advancements such as artificial intelligence (AI), automation, and smart manufacturing solutions.

"We are particularly excited about the potential for collaboration with universities and research organisations, as well as multinational corporations looking to establish or expand operations in Southeast Asia."

Invest Selangor also recognises the crucial role that local SMEs play in the aerospace industry and is committed to supporting their growth and development through SAS 2024.

"The event offers them a valuable platform to showcase their contributions to the local

economy, including job creation and business growth.

"One of the key benefits for SMEs participating in SAS 2024 is the extensive media exposure they will receive, both nationally and internationally.

"This visibility is expected to highlight their expertise and capabilities, from manufacturing components to providing essential support services.

"Additionally, the event offers SMEs the opportunity to network with larger industry players, potential partners, and customers to foster new business relationships and collaborative opportunities," he said.

With the MAIB's vision of achieving an annual revenue of RM55.2 billion and creating more than 32,000 high-income jobs by 2030, SAS 2024 would be an essential platform for it to realise these ambitious goals.

"We believe that SAS can be a conduit to achieving such targets," he said, adding that the event will also help SMEs access industry funding that would contribute to technological advancements and boost the competitiveness of the aerospace industry.

## SAS in numbers

	2023	2022	2021
<b>Trade Visitors</b>	19,217 (55%)	10,563 (32.14%)	4,987 (6.2%)
<b>Total Booth</b>	224	124	47
<b>Total Static Displays</b>	49	30	18
<b>Potential Transaction Value (RM)</b>	823 mil	1.174 bil	100 mil
<b>Total Companies</b>	109	62	-
<b>Total Potential Buyers</b>	80	7	-
<b>Stage Programmes</b>	34	37	21
<b>Total Speakers</b>	70	86	42
<b>Participating Countries</b>	42	12	25
<b>Total MoUs</b>	28	14	13

Source selangoraviationshow.com



# Inspiring innovation

The MAIA is cultivating fresh ideas to help Selangor's aviation programme stay ahead of the curve

BY DANIAL DZULKIFLY



THE Malaysian Aerospace Industry Association (MAIA) has embarked on a new journey with Selangor through its involvement in the First Selangor Plan (RS-1), the state's five-year economic and social development blueprint.

The plan is set to supercharge Selangor's already dominant position in Malaysia's aerospace landscape. With over 60 per cent of the country's aerospace manufacturing and MRO (maintenance, repair, and operations) capabilities concentrated in the state, RS-1's targeted approach promises to elevate the industry further.

MAIA's president Naguib Mohd Nor revealed that the association is working closely with the state to accelerate the sector's growth.

"The knowledge is there. It is all about execution now, and nothing drives execution like pressure. The current environment is ripe for change," he said in a recent interview with *Selangor Journal*.

## REDEFINING STANDARDS

Naguib said MAIA is tackling major challenges in the sector head-on. With 111 members, mostly in Selangor, and including major players in aviation, they have the pulse on what the industry requires most.

This includes helping industry players who work with the state train and retain talent in Malaysia.

Among the major efforts spearheaded by MAIA is developing the aerospace skills framework under the Selangor Skills Framework Platform (SSFP).

"This framework, which has been integrated into a digital system by the state government under SSFP, is one of the most detailed skills frameworks

in the country. It includes eight levels of job title definitions and provides clear career paths.

"Clarity in defining competencies, similar to what we see with SkillsFuture in Singapore, is crucial. It ensures that we understand the competencies required for current and emerging roles.

"The digital nature of the system allows the industry to sign up and provide updates, enabling organisations to build and update their organisational charts. This helps to maintain the high standards needed for skills and competence achievements," he said.

This task is being undertaken by the Future Skills Talent Council of TalentCorp, where MAIA anchors the aerospace council.

It is vital to establish clear assessment criteria for any complex industry, Naguib said, as the need for definitions for competence is a significant problem in these industries.

"Without clear definitions, it is challenging to prove the required standards. Once these definitions are in place, institutions can benchmark properly, and we can train trainers to elevate people to the necessary standard.

"New high-tech investments often articulate a skill or competence requirement, and the standard response is to provide a certificate. However, the certificate does not always reflect competence or skill level.

"We are working with the state and the Department of Skills Development to redefine these standards and ensure they are dynamic and updated regularly. I think this is the key to moving the needle forward," he said.

Another major issue is brain drain. Naguib stated that the matter is more complex than just talents seeking better pay abroad.

Higher salaries should not be used as a reason to whitewash the serious issues raised by talents about our local industries.

"It is not as simple as just paying more.

Interestingly, for many technical professionals, the issue is not solely about salary. You do not need to match Singapore salaries to retain Malaysian talent, but you do need to offer job satisfaction," he said.

"Even Singapore is losing talent to other places ... like Google."

## A CRUCIAL ROLE

While the aviation industry faces many challenges, Naguib expressed his confidence about the industry's development within the country, particularly in Selangor.

The excitement comes from the fact that the goal is not just about building a national aviation hub but a regional one, and with the new addition of drone technology, the sector can only expand year on year.

To ensure the industry's voices are properly heard and positioned, Naguib said MAIA has always participated in the Selangor Aviation Show (SAS), the state's premier commercial aviation platform for trade and investments.

MAIA envisions SAS becoming like the Oshkosh Air Show in Wisconsin in the US, the European Business Aviation Convention and Exhibition, the Farnborough International Airshow in the United Kingdom, and the Paris Air Show in France.

For this year, the air show, which was first introduced in 2021, is scheduled from Sept 12 to 14. More information can be found at [selangoraviationshow.com](http://selangoraviationshow.com).

"Malaysia's involvement in the aerospace industry is significant but often underappreciated. For instance, almost every door on a 737 Boeing plane is made in Malaysia. People are usually surprised to learn this.

"They think it is just one door, but it is much more comprehensive than that," he said, adding that Malaysia already has a comprehensive aviation manufacturing sector that produces critical parts for major players like Boeing and Airbus.

"Malaysians can be a bit myopic about how they view their contributions. I am often asked if Malaysia can become an aerospace hub, and my answer is that we already are.

"Many Malaysians are unaware that we also contribute to the space industry. For example, a significant number of parts for SpaceX rockets and Starlink satellites are made in Asia, including Malaysia.

"These companies cannot always declare who they produce the parts for. Therefore, the nation is blissfully unaware of this and the opportunities it represents," Naguib said.



**'MAIA is tackling major challenges in the sector head-on. With 111 members, mostly in Selangor, and including major players in aviation, they have the pulse on what the industry requires most.'**

# Growing the economic pie

With the Federal's Bumiputera-leaning PuTERA35 already in place, Selangor sets out with its own plan to provide equal opportunities to all

BY DANIAL DZULKIFLY



**3** Cores | **12** Thrusts (or drivers) | **132** Initiatives



Source Economic Planning Unit (EPU)

HE recently launched Bumiputera Economic Transformation Plan 2035, or PuTERA35, is the Unity Government's strategy for advancing the socioeconomic status of Bumiputera in Malaysia.

While the policy aims to enhance equity and economic participation among Bumiputera, economic experts argue that it is more pragmatic than ambitious.

According to economist Prof Emeritus Barjoiy Bardai of the Malaysia University of Science and Technology (MUST), PuTERA35 is crucial to demonstrating that the current administration has a plan to improve Bumiputeras's overall economic standing.

"It's important to keep reminding the government machinery that the Bumiputera community still exists and lags behind, requiring support.

"If the government doesn't continue to emphasise this, the Bumiputera might feel neglected, and the government machinery might not work as hard to provide assistance," he said.

However, Barjoiy suggested that the government should focus more on inclusive policies that improve the socioeconomic status of all communities, which would be a better approach.

"Bumiputera professionals currently make up about 62 per cent of the total labour market. The target is only to increase this by 8 per cent over the next 12 years. That's not particularly ambitious.

"The government probably thinks that since the Bumiputera population is about 70 per cent, it can't exceed that percentage.

"From an inclusivity standpoint, if Bumiputera should own 70 per cent of the wealth or equity, we're only targeting 30 per cent ownership to be achieved in 12 years. This isn't ambitious at all. We've had the New Economic Policy (NEP) since the 1970s, and even back then, the target was 30 per cent.

"We're currently at around 18 per cent. Now, to achieve the remaining 12 per cent in the next 12 years doesn't seem very ambitious. We should probably be aiming higher.

"Overall, I'd say that the PuTERA 2035 plan is pragmatic, but I don't think it's necessary. We should aim for inclusivity, where each ethnic group gets a share corresponding to its population percentage.

"If the Bumiputera community makes up 70 per cent of the population, they should receive 70 per cent of the equity, professional representation, housing, and so forth," he said when contacted.

Barjoiy acknowledged that the Bumiputera community faces a disadvantage in the open market due to structural problems inherited since independence.

He said that there has been a shift in the government's approach to helping all Malaysians, not just the Bumiputera community. This includes adopting austerity measures and implementing targeted subsidies rather than a broad approach.

"Entrepreneurial development among Bumiputera started even before independence, with initiatives like Rida (Rural and Industrial Development Authority). However, we need a mental revolution, a paradigm shift within the Bumiputera community.

"Historically, they've been farmers, not businesspeople, so they lack a natural inclination towards entrepreneurship. This change requires a generational shift in mindset, culture, and attitude. Unfortunately, we may have rushed this process, skipping the necessary steps for mental and cultural transformation and jumping straight into management training.

"By removing subsidies on petrol and diesel, for instance, we could help create a more competitive society where people are more willing to take risks and develop themselves.

"However, we can't expect everyone to become successful entrepreneurs. Some people will still need assistance, so we need a social safety net — not just for Bumiputera, but for all Malaysians."

## MAXIMISING POTENTIAL

Selangor contributes 25.9 per cent, or almost one-third, of the national economy and aims to increase its contribution year on year.

Taking a broad and proactive approach, the Selangor state administration focuses on helping all entrepreneurs, regardless of their race, with an emphasis on assisting them to scale from micro to small and medium enterprises.

State executive councillor for sports and entrepreneurship Najwan Halimi explained that most of the entrepreneur programme beneficiaries are from the Bumiputera community.

"In Selangor, we are helping all communities; however, most beneficiaries of these state government programmes are

Bumiputera entrepreneurs, and we aim to support them in expanding their businesses.

"But our challenge is to help these microentrepreneurs scale up to larger enterprises. Agencies like Menteri Besar Selangor (Incorporated) or MBI, Platform Selangor (PLATS), Yayasan Hijrah Selangor, and local authority offices are working together to help these businesses grow from small to medium and beyond. Selangor Information Technology and Digital Economy Corporation (Sidec) also offers exposure to international markets to further support business expansion.

"We have set specific targets for the entrepreneurial development programmes in Selangor. This includes identifying how many entrepreneurs we can spotlight, providing them with not only financial grants and support but also exposure to export opportunities, packaging, and marketing," he said in a recent interview.

Najwan said the state has also launched the '1000 Digital' initiative in collaboration with PLATS and Sidec, aiming to train 1,000 young entrepreneurs. The programme would provide them with skills to effectively utilise digitalisation.

"Entrepreneurs today are moving away from traditional methods to online marketing and sales. Modern entrepreneurs may only need products and a smartphone to promote their goods via social media platforms like

TikTok, Instagram, and Shopee. We aim to expose both young and SME entrepreneurs to these digital tools, helping them maximise their business potential.

"We are also exploring opportunities in the creative economy, which includes the arts, digitalisation, and creative industries. Selangor is developing policies for the creative economy, engaging various stakeholders, and will announce these initiatives in due course," he said.

Najwan also stated that the state government's focus is to help budding entrepreneurs understand risk management and how to manage their profits.

"Of course, youth today prefer stable jobs, but many are becoming increasingly creative and daring. However, they often face challenges with funding and business management.

"To address this, we provide financial support and training in marketing and management through programmes like Hijrah Selangor. This training includes digital documentation and profit management, helping entrepreneurs manage their finances effectively.

"Overall, Selangor is committed to supporting young entrepreneurs with comprehensive assistance, including financial grants, equipment, and training programmes, ensuring they have the resources to succeed in their business ventures.



# Daring to dream

Selangor is going back to the drawing board to vie for Sukma 2026's top spot

BY DANIAL DZULKIFLY

**S**ELANGOR concluded its participation in the 21st Malaysia Games (Sukma 2024) with an impressive tally of 56 gold medals, standing tall in third place behind Sarawak and the Federal Territories.

While the state fell short of its gold medal target of 61, its strong showing was more than just a statistic — it was a rallying call for the future.

State executive councillor for sports Najwan Halimi said as Selangor gears up to host Sukma 2026, the state is now setting its sights on becoming the overall champion.

“If we look at current achievements, our sports development plan has been quite effective, given that we’ve had less than two years to prepare since Sukma 2022 in Kuala Lumpur. In this short time, we’ve seen some positive results.

“However, some of the gold medal targets ended in silver, which we believe can be improved within the next two years.

“For example, our rugby team, which won silver in 2022, managed to secure gold this time. This shows that with time and proper grooming, we can convert more silver medals into gold in the next Sukma.

“There’s still much to do, and we need to give our athletes time to improve. Some of them performed well despite participating in Sukma for the first time. With more experience, they can achieve even better

results in the next edition,” he said in a recent interview with *Selangor Journal*.

## NEW STRATEGIES IN PLACE

In gearing up to host Sukma 2026, Selangor is prioritising core sports such as aquatics and athletics, which have traditionally been areas of strength, Najwan said.

Additionally, efforts will be made to bolster less prominent sports like archery and shooting, ensuring a more comprehensive approach to athlete development.

“In terms of performance, we’ve identified that aquatics and athletics are our strong suits. Initially, we only targeted three gold medals in aquatics, but we ended up with 13, and athletics also surpassed expectations. These two sports will be the main focus for athlete development.

“We’ve also seen significant improvements in women’s football and rugby, both of which won gold medals, and basketball, where we swept all four events, including 5-on-5 and 3-on-3 for both men and women. Futsal also secured gold in the men’s event. These are the sports we’ll be focusing on for the next Sukma.

“However, we also need to reassess our training programmes for archery and shooting, as we fell short of our gold medal targets in these sports. We won silver and bronze, but with increased training efforts, we aim to secure gold in these events in Sukma 2026,” he said.

## SUKMA 2024 MEDAL TALLY

#	STATE	G	S	B	GSB
1	Sarawak	76	55	70	201
2	W. Persekutuan	75	65	72	212
3	Selangor	56	64	61	181
4	Pulau Pinang	41	45	52	138
5	Terengganu	41	36	47	124
6	Johor	35	42	58	135
7	Perak	35	38	57	130
8	Sabah	29	36	55	120
9	Pahang	23	21	32	76
12	Kedah	21	19	28	68
11	Negeri Sembilan	19	13	24	56
10	Melaka	17	23	30	70
13	Perlis	12	15	16	43
14	Kelantan	7	13	17	37
15	Brunei	2	2	3	7



Najwan said hosting Sukma is not just about promoting Selangor as a sports tourism destination, but also enhancing its sports infrastructure and athlete development.

“The last time we hosted Sukma was in 1998, before the Commonwealth Games, and many of those facilities are still in use today. For 2026, we’ll be looking to upgrade these facilities to meet current standards.

“We’ll also consider introducing additional sports and expanding current ones for Sukma 2026,” he said.

Najwan revealed that Sukma 2026 will hold special significance as it coincides with the 25th anniversary of the reign of Sultan of Selangor, Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah Alhaj, promising a landmark event for the state.

“God willing, Sukma 2026 will be an event where we showcase Selangor’s commitment to sports development and celebrate this royal milestone with the successful hosting of the games.”

### AN ALL-ROUNDED APPROACH

Beyond the medal tally, Najwan said the state has adopted a holistic approach to sports development, aiming to create a more conducive environment and a complete ecosystem to ensure athletes reach their full potential while promoting their sport to the masses.

“The uniqueness of Selangor is that we take a holistic approach. While we have the facilities and resources, we must also be aware of the advancements in other states like Sarawak, the Federal Territories, Terengganu and Penang, which are our main competitors.

“In Selangor, we can’t just focus on a few sports; we need to ensure that our development programmes cover a wide range of sports to maintain our status as a powerhouse in producing quality athletes for the nation.

“We must continue to develop all major and high-performance sports to groom athletes who can represent not just Selangor but Malaysia at regional and



international levels.”

Despite operating with an annual sports budget of around RM7 to RM8 million over the last decade, Najwan reiterated the state’s commitment to ensuring its athletes compete at the international level.

“Even with financial constraints, we recognise the value of sustained investment in our athletes. Their exposure to regional and international competitions is crucial for their growth, and we are dedicated to ensuring that they have the opportunities to shine on bigger stages.

“This is particularly evident when we consider the costs involved in participating in events like Sukma, where the logistics and preparation for a multi-sport event across multiple districts require significant financial commitment.

“We’ve received support from state agencies and local authorities, which have helped us manage these costs, but there’s still

a need for increased investment in sports.”

### INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

Taking the example of the Red Giants’ win in the recent E-sports World Cup held in Riyadh this year, Najwan said consistent investment is needed to ensure athletes’ success.

“If we want our athletes to continue improving, we need to make appropriate investments. The success of the Selangor Red Giants in the E-sports World Cup is a prime example of how proper investment can yield positive results.

“The commitment in training and hiring international coaches has been significant, and it shows that with the right investment, we can achieve great things.

“However, it’s not just about financial support; our athletes also need exposure to competitions at various local and

international levels to improve their rankings and skills.”

Najwan said a similar strategy and attention are also needed to booster niche sports, such as archery and kabaddi.

“Promoting sports like archery, which require significant financial commitment for equipment, is challenging. Not everyone can afford to participate, but we’re committed to identifying and supporting talent in these areas.

“We’ll provide training programmes and opportunities to compete at higher levels. As for sports like kabaddi, which may have previously been associated with specific communities, we’re seeing increasing interest across different demographics,” he said.

“Although we didn’t achieve significant success in kabaddi this time, the growing interest is a positive sign, and we’re looking at ways to develop further and expand its participation.”



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# A glimpse into history

Our old buildings have stories to tell, and lessons to teach

BY YASMIN RAMLAN

**M**ALAYSIA celebrated its 67th National Day on August 31, and with Malaysia Day on September 16, what better way to ignite the flame of patriotism than to journey through time at the historical sites of Selangor and Kuala Lumpur?

While it is common knowledge that Kuala Lumpur was first established as a tin mining town in the 1850s, our capital once belonged to the state of Selangor, emerging to become a Federal Territory in its own right only in 1974.

The fact that the two places have a shared history is unquestionable.

Key sites such as Merdeka Square, where the Malaysian flag was first raised in 1957, and the iconic Sultan Abdul Samad Building, which served as the administrative centre during the colonial era, stand as testaments to the country's struggle for independence in the Kuala Lumpur side of the story.

Meanwhile, Selangor boasts its own historical treasures, including Bukit Malawati, a strategic hilltop fort that once helped the Selangor Sultanate drive out the Dutch, and Royal Klang Town, known for its rich cultural heritage.

Together, these sites celebrate Malaysia's diverse history and provide visitors with a deeper understanding of the events that shaped the nation, making them essential stops for anyone looking to commemorate Independence Day.

## 1 MERDEKA SQUARE

Also known as Dataran Merdeka, this historic landmark in the heart of Kuala Lumpur is where the Malaysian flag was raised for the first time on August 31, 1957, marking the country's independence from British rule.

Surrounded by iconic colonial-era buildings, including the stunning Sultan Abdul Samad Building, the square today features one of the world's tallest flagpoles at 95 metres that proudly flies the Jalur Gemilang.

Visitors to Merdeka Square are often seen relaxing on its well-maintained lawns, photographing its picturesque backdrop, and exploring nearby attractions like Central Market and Petaling Street. The Square also comes alive during our annual National Day celebrations.

## 2 MERDEKA STADIUM

Merdeka Stadium, inaugurated on August 31, 1957, symbolises Malaysia's independence and national pride. Located in Kuala Lumpur, it was where Tunku Abdul Rahman declared the nation's freedom from British rule, famously shouting 'Merdeka!' to an audience of 20,000 people.

The stadium has been preserved as a national heritage site, reflecting its importance in our journey to sovereignty. It recently underwent upgrading and repair works, with The Sultan of Selangor Cup on August 17 becoming the first event held at the venue since its reopening.

## 3 SULTAN ABDUL SAMAD BUILDING

The Sultan Abdul Samad Building, completed in 1897, is a prominent landmark along Jalan Raja, directly opposite Dataran Merdeka in Kuala Lumpur.

Originally serving as the administrative centre for the British colonial government, the building showcases a stunning blend of Indo-Saracenic and Neo-Gothic architectural styles. It is characterised by its striking red brick facade, tall white arches, and a majestic 41-metre clock tower reminiscent of London's Big Ben.

This iconic structure holds great historical significance as it was where the Union Jack was lowered for the last time at midnight on August 30, 1957.

Today, it serves as a backdrop for our National Day celebrations, where thousands gather to commemorate the nation's freedom.

## 4 CENTRAL MARKET

Central Market, or Pasar Seni, is a historic cultural landmark in Kuala Lumpur, originally established in 1888 as a wet market.

This vibrant hub

showcases the country's rich heritage through a diverse array of stalls offering traditional handicrafts, art, and souvenirs that reflect the multicultural tapestry of Malaysian society.

The Art Deco building, completed in 1937, houses not only shops but also galleries and cultural workshops, making it a popular destination for both locals and tourists. Visitors can enjoy a variety of Malaysian and international cuisines at its food court, and engage in cultural activities like batik painting and henna art.

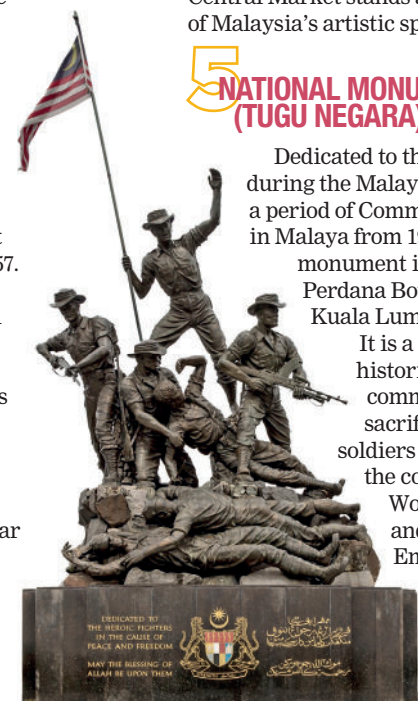
Easily accessible by public transport, Central Market stands as a celebration of Malaysia's artistic spirit.

## 5 NATIONAL MONUMENT (TUGU NEGARA)

Dedicated to the 11,000 lives lost during the Malayan Emergency — a period of Communist insurgency in Malaya from 1948 to 1960 — this monument is located in the Perdana Botanical Garden in Kuala Lumpur.

It is a significant historical landmark commemorating the sacrifices of Malaysian soldiers who fought for the country during World War II and the Malayan Emergency.

Designed by Austrian sculptor Tan Sri Felix de Weldon, the





monument features seven towering bronze statues, symbolising the courage and unity of the Malaysian armed forces. It is not only a place for reflection but also a site of national importance, where the king, prime minister, and other officials gather annually on July 31 to honour the nation's fallen heroes.

This and its tranquil surroundings make Tugu Negara a must-visit for those looking to understand the country's quest for freedom.

## 6 KUALA LUMPUR RAILWAY STATION

The Kuala Lumpur Railway Station, an architectural masterpiece built in 1910, is one of the most picturesque and prominent landmarks in Kuala Lumpur. Completed in 1917, it showcases a blend of Eastern and Western architectural designs, most notably its stunning facade of intricate arches and domes.

The station initially served as the central hub for the Federated Malay States Railways, playing a crucial role in connecting Kuala Lumpur with the rest of the Malay Peninsula until the opening of Kuala Lumpur Sentral in 2001.

Today, the station remains operational, offering a glimpse into Malaysia's colonial past.

## 7 RUMAH TANGSI — THE MANSION OF LOKE CHOW KIT

Rumah Tangsi, also known as The Mansion of Loke Chow Kit, is a historical gem in the heart of Kuala Lumpur that offers

a unique glimpse into the opulent lifestyle of one of the country's most prominent entrepreneurs from the early 20th century.

Built in the 1900s, this stately mansion was the residence of Loke Chow Kit, a successful businessman and philanthropist who played a significant role in the development of Kuala Lumpur.

Today, it is a beautifully preserved cultural landmark that hosts various exhibitions and events that celebrate Malaysia's culturally diverse heritage.

## 8 RUMAH PENGHULU ABU SEMAN

Rumah Penghulu Abu Seman is one of Malaysia's finest examples of traditional Malay architecture and offers a fascinating look into the country's rural past.

Originally built in the late 19th century in Kedah, the house was the residence of a village headman, or *penghulu*, named Abu Seman. It was meticulously restored and relocated to the heart of Kuala Lumpur, where it now serves as a museum under the care of The Heritage of Malaysia Trust.

The house is a remarkable display of craftsmanship, featuring wooden panels, elevated stilts, and a design that reflects the traditional Malay house.

## 9 JAMEK MOSQUE

The Jamek Mosque is located at the confluence of the Klang and Gombak rivers, where Kuala Lumpur was founded. Officially known as Sultan Abdul Samad Jamek Mosque, it is one of the city's oldest and most iconic religious structures.

Built in 1909, this mosque is a beautiful



example of Islamic-Mughal architecture, featuring striking domes, arched colonnades, and slender minarets.

It served as the city's main mosque before the National Mosque was built.

## 10 SIN SZE SI YA TEMPLE

Built in 1864 by Kapitan Yap Ah Loy, one of Kuala Lumpur's founding fathers, the temple is one of Kuala Lumpur's oldest, dedicated to the deity Sze Si Ya. It is a popular site during Chinese New Year, attracting many visitors seeking blessings that offers a unique perspective on Malaysia's multicultural heritage.

Sze Si Ya is believed to have guided Yap Ah Loy in his leadership during the city's early development. The temple's architecture features intricate carvings and traditional Chinese design elements, reflecting the vibrancy of the community even then.

## 11 SRI MAHA MARIAMMAN TEMPLE

Sri Maha Mariamman Temple, founded in 1873, is the oldest and most famous Hindu temple in Kuala Lumpur. It serves as a cultural landmark and a testament to the rich heritage of the Indian community in Malaysia.

Located at the edge of Chinatown, this temple features an ornate 22.9-meter-high Raja Gopuram tower and intricate carvings of Hindu deities sculpted by artisans from southern India. The temple has undergone several renovations throughout its history, with the current structure completed in 1968.

As an active place of worship, Sri Maha Mariamman Temple attracts thousands of

devotees during major Hindu festivals like Deepavali and Thaipusam.

## 12 BUKIT MALAWATI, KUALA SELANGOR

Bukit Malawati, a historic hill in Kuala Selangor, offers a glimpse into Malaysia's military history. Established in the late 18th century, this hillfort was built to protect the Sultan of Selangor from foreign invaders, particularly during conflicts with the Dutch.

Visitors can explore various historical relics, including old cannons, the remnants of a fort, and a lighthouse that has been guiding ships since 1907.

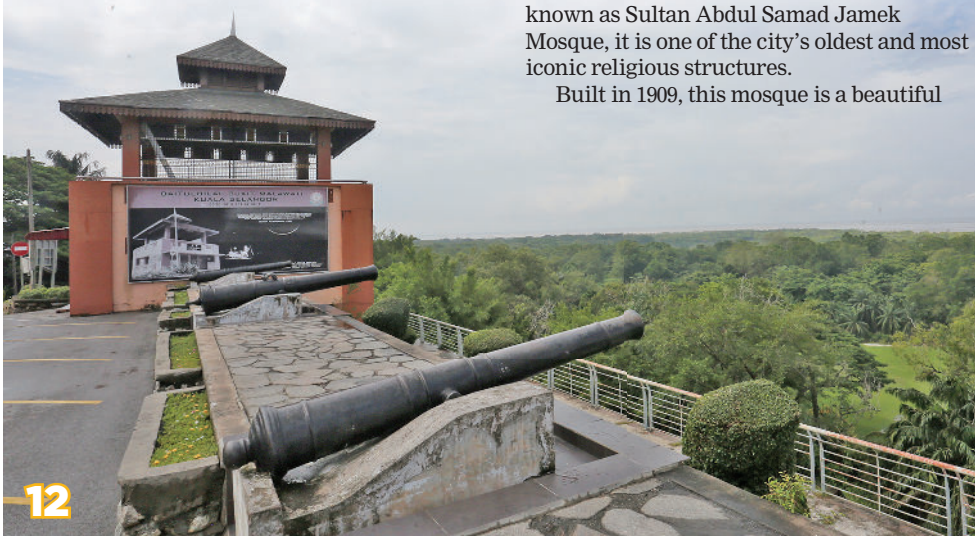
Bukit Malawati also features a royal mausoleum and a poison well, adding to its intriguing past. The site also provides breathtaking panoramic views of the Straits of Malacca.

## 13 ROYAL KLANG TOWN

Royal Klang Town, located in the state of Selangor, is steeped in history.

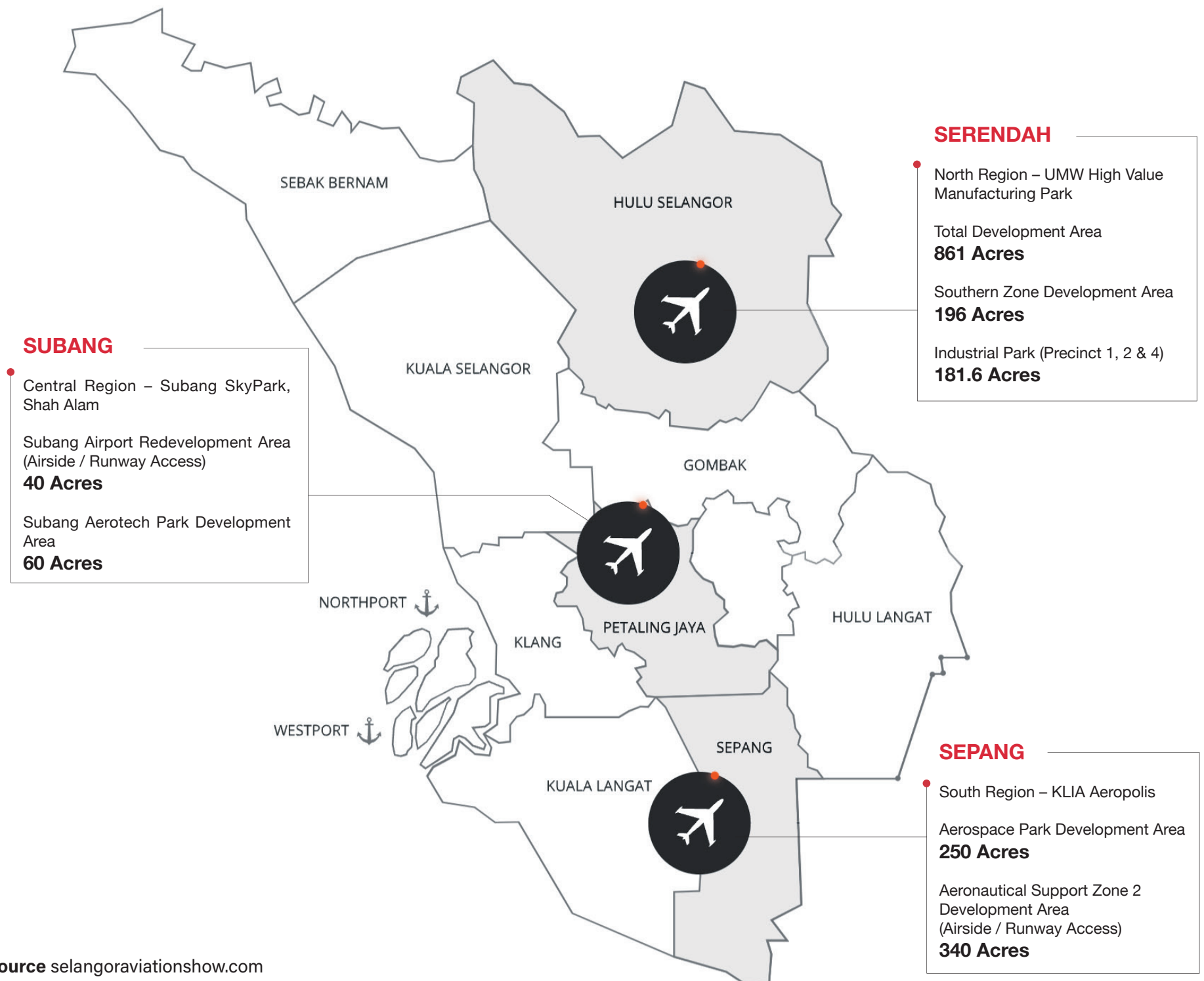
Once a bustling trading hub and the royal seat of the Selangor Sultanate, Klang is home to numerous historical landmarks, including the stately Sultan Abdul Aziz Royal Gallery, which houses artefacts and exhibits belonging to the Selangor royal family. The town also features the picturesque Little India district, the century-old Royal Klang Mosque, and the historic Church of Our Lady of Lourdes.

A walk through Royal Klang Town allows visitors to experience a blend of cultures and the architectural legacy of the British colonialists and the Malay rulers.



# The preferred aerospace hub

Selangor stands out as the state with the fastest-growing aerospace ecosystem in the country, with activity bustling across its different regions — Serendah in the north, Subang at the centre, and Sepang down south. With 62 per cent of the country's 240 aerospace companies located here, it has earned the title, 'Malaysia's preferred aerospace hub', offering incredible business opportunities to potential investors from across the region and beyond.



Source [selangoraviationshow.com](http://selangoraviationshow.com)

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