

Headline **MALAYSIA IN VENICE**
Date **30 Jun 2010**
MediaTitle **Malay Mail**
Section **MailMoney**
Journalist **N/A**
Frequency **Daily**
Circ / Read **20,816 / 49,000**

Language **English**
Page No **10**
Article Size **275 cm²**
Color **Full Color**
ADValue **2,285**
PRValue **6,854**



MALAYSIA IN VENICE

Malaysian designs on show at prestigious architectural exhibition

EE ANN NEE

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysian architectural designs, styles and ideas will be making their debut at the world-renowned international architecture exhibition, La Biennale Di Venezia, in Venice, Italy.

The showcase of Malaysia's architectural services at the 12th La Biennale Di Venezia from Aug 26 to Nov 21. The Malaysian delegation will be led by the Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (Matrade) and Malaysian Institute of Architects (PAM). Some 21 Malaysian architectural design firms will be participating in the event.

At a media conference hosted by Matrade and PAM this morning, Matrade chief executive officer Datuk Noharuddin Nordin said participation in the La Biennale di Venezia is a significant milestone for the Malaysian architectural services sector.

"Once a country is selected to be in the exhibition, that country will gain recognition within the global industry as participation in the event is by invitation-only from the organisers.

"It is timely that our architectural services be showcased among international players through La Biennale. Matrade sees this as a way to specifically promote the services sector overseas," he said.

Noharudin said the cost for the architecture exhibition will be borne by Matrade and PAM on a 50-50 basis, adding that Matrade's expenditure alone is about RM200,000. He also pointed out that Malaysian architects have been successful in designing various projects overseas including resorts, residential and commercial towers and airports.

"It is apt that we now focus on branding our architectural capa-

bilities and expertise for the global market to enhance the global visibility of Malaysian architects," he said.

PAM president Boon Che Wee said apart from branding Malaysian architectural firms at an international event,

participation at the show could provide opportunities for obtaining new clients, drawing up joint-venture agreements with potential clients and for gaining insights into the global architectural industry.

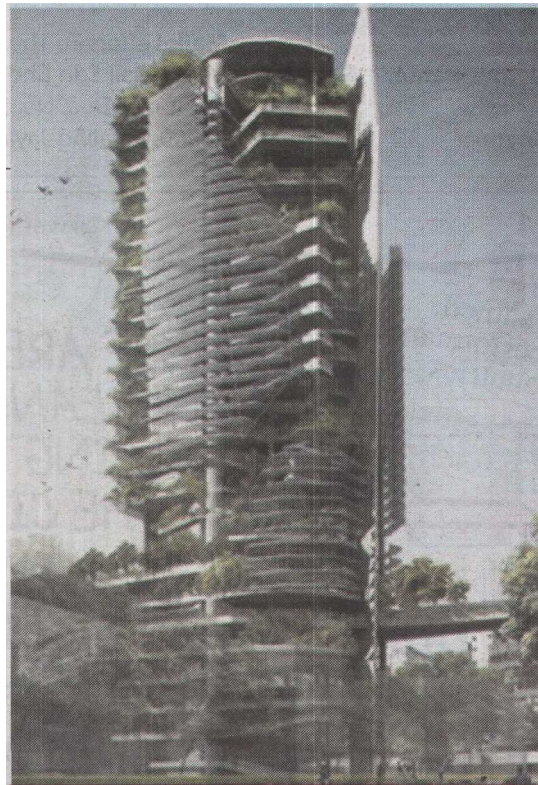
Participation in the La Biennale di Venezia provides the credentials for Malaysia to organise road shows within the next two years in other countries to showcase architecture models that were exhibits in Venice.

Boon said La Biennale Di Venezia started as a showcase of Italian art in 1895, eventually becoming the oldest and most important international visual art event in the world.

As an international platform for contemporary art, it has evolved over the years to include architecture. The Architecture Biennale is now recognised as the most strategic, high-profile event on the international calendar of contemporary architecture.

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CREATIVE: The contemporary Aeditt Tower in Singapore, which represents an ecological building for the Tropics was designed by Malaysian architecture firm TR Hamzah & Yeang