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Its own home at last for Kuching's 90-year-old Chinese chamber

KUCHING, Mon. - Ever since its formation some 90 years ago, the influential Kuching Chinese General Chamber of Commerce and Industry never really had a place they could call home.

But that changed early this year when they moved into Wisma Chinese Chamber, an eight-storey building which they started building in 1995.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is scheduled to open this RM10 million building on Sunday.

Located right beside the proposed RM55 million Gateway Kuching, which would be the city's tallest building when completed, and only a stone's throw away from Kuching Hilton, Wisma Chinese Chamber boasts traditional Chinese architecture.

It was due for completion in 1997 but delayed because of the economic downturn. Completed in March last year, its occupants started moving in early this year after having renovation works done.

Kuching Chinese Chamber sold four of the eight storeys to the Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry, another two to two private firms, and kept the remaining two for itself.

This means that Wisma Chinese Chamber houses two Chinese chambers.

Formed when Sarawak was still under the rule of the White Rajahs, the Kuching Chinese Chamber was housed in a one-storey squarish-looking building lying just opposite the famous Tua Pek Kong temple at Main Bazaar.

The Kuching Chinese Chamber has a membership of about 1,000 companies (membership is by companies, not individuals).

Its State-level counterpart, the Associated Chinese Chambers, is the umbrella body for 22 Chinese chambers in the State.

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