

20 MAR 2001

INVESTORS-SARAJEVO

TWO MALAYSIAN INVESTORS SPEARHEAD PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT IN SARAJEVO

By: Ahmad Fuad Yahya

KUALA LUMPUR, March 20 (Bernama) -- Two Malaysian investors and their Bosnians partners are spearheading the property development sector in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was ravaged by communal strife in the nineties.

Haji Hassan Jamaluddin and Haji Noor Hazin Haji Mohd Zain had joined hands with Bosnians Nijas Sabanovic and Eddin Sabanovic to form a company named Bosmal D.O.O. in 1998. They are now ready to start a DM126 million (RM223.02 million) project to develop a multi-storey commercial cum residential complex in Sarajevo.

The project, which is scheduled to start in June, involve the construction of two condominium tower blocks, three-storey commercial podium, 150-room hotel, 70 unit service apartments and a 10-storey corporate office block.

The project, a fully integrated self-contained development, is said to be the first of its kind in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the whole of Balkans.

Upon its completion in 42 months, the project known as Bosmal Place, will be the first condominium to be built in the city of Sarajevo.

Today, Bosmal D.O.O. secured a US\$20 million (RM76 million) loan from Bank Islam (Labuan) Ltd (BILL) to start the project. The signing of the agreement for the loan today was witnessed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and the President of Bosnia and Herzegovina Dr Halid Genjac at the Prime Minister's Department in Putrajaya.

Bosmal D.O.O. was represented by its president Hassan and managing director Nijas while BILL was represented by its chairman Datuk Ahmad Tajudin Abdul Rahman and chief executive officer Raja Zainal Alam Shah Raja Abdullah Omar.

Bosmal D.O.O. executive director Noor Hazin said the company took the initiative to go into the property development because the property market in Bosnia was very demanding in the post-war era whereby many of the houses had been damaged due to the war.

"There is a lot of expatriates in Bosnia, from the United Nations, from the European Union, but they don't have anywhere to stay," Noor Hazin said.

"That's how Bosmal entered the property development sector to cater for the critical demand in Bosnia and, we help to give the advice and guidance based on our experience gained during the Malaysian booming property industry," he said.

Their two Bosnian partners have worked in Malaysia for eight years, and after the war both of them went home to help rebuild their country with the support of the Malaysian partners.

Bosmal D.O.O. is a 50-50 Malaysian and Bosnian venture. Its paid-up capital is DM3.5 million (RM7 million) while the authorised capital is DM10 million (RM19 million).

Noor Hazin said the company would focus in the property market because there was an acute shortage in the sector.

After the war, he said, there were about 1.5 million displaced refugees who were waiting to return home and about 500,000 people who did not have any place at all to stay.

"It took us six years to study the market and to wait for the right timing to launch this project," he said.

At the moment, Noor Hazin said Bosmal D.O.O. was the pioneer in this

type of development in Bosnia and the Balkan. The project is the first ever comprehensive development with luxury condominium units, hotel, corporate offices as well as service apartments.

Purchasers of the residential units at Bosmal Place only need to bring their suitcases because it would be fully furnished right to computers, televisions and refrigerators, he said.

They will also enjoy facilities such as tennis and squash courts, swimming pool, sauna, gymnasium, bowling centre and health centre.

He said Bosmal D.O.O. have bigger plans in the property development in Sarajevo but it would only be implemented after the success of the Bosmal Place project.

Noor Hazin said the company has been talking with the Bosnian authorities to develop a comprehensive city centre in the heart of Sarajevo, which was equivalent to the Kuala Lumpur Golden Triangle, costing about US\$1 billion. -- BERNAMA

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