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Chance to win

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THREE Malaysian property projects have been short-listed for the 2002 Prix d'Excellence competition, an event organised by the Paris-based International Real Estate Federation (Fiabci).

Considered by many to be the "Oscars" of the global real estate industry, the Prix d'Excellence is awarded for the best property developments in six categories: residential, office/industrial, leisure, retail, public sector and specialised projects, and is considered to be a much-desired accolade by developers in Fiabci's member countries.

The three Malaysian projects that have been included in the final list of possible winners are Sunrise Bhd's Mont'Kiara Sophia condominium project, Sunway Group's Sunway Lagoon Hotel Resort and the Petronas Twin Towers. Mont'Kiara Sophia will compete with 11 other projects in the residential category, while the Twin Towers will face five developments in the office/industrial category. The Sunway Lagoon Hotel Resort has been short-listed with four other projects in the leisure category.

Fiabci Malaysian chapter president Kumar Tharmalingam said a panel of judges from the international real estate fraternity will meet next month in Kuala Lumpur to decide on which of the 35 projects shortlisted should be awarded this year's Prix d'Excellence in the various categories. The winners will be announced during the Fiabci World Congress to be held in KL from May 26 to 31.

The event which is being hosted by Fiabci Malaysia and the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, has lined up 28 local and international speakers from various countries. Among the local speakers are Pengurusan Danaharta Nasional Bhd managing director Abdul Hamidy Hafiz, Talam Corporation Bhd chairman Tan Sri Chan Ah Chye, IBM Malaysia chief executive officer Voon Seng Chuan and Putrajaya Holdings Sdn Bhd chairman Datuk Prof Zainuddin Muhammad.

International speakers include renowned American architect Cesar Pelli, author of the design for the Petronas Twin Towers (PTT), China Yangtze Three Gorges Project Development Corporation vice-president Wang Jiazhu and Singapore's Suntec City Development Pte Ltd CEO Wong Ah Long.

The Fiabci World Congress in KL will be officially opened by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who will also deliver the keynote address on "Building the property vision" in keeping with the theme. Tharmalingam said to date, 300 participants had registered for the event, but he anticipates that more will sign up closer to the date of the Congress.

"Initially, we had expected some 1,500 delegates to attend, but downsized our expectations after the Sept 11 attacks, when we realised those from the United States would be reluctant to attend. However, it appears that we may have a substantial turnout after all, as there is increased interest this year from real estate professionals in Japan, Korea, Indonesia, Australia and Europe, as well as renewed confidence from the Americans due to efforts by Fiabci USA and the US Embassy in KL," he said.

Those interested in knowing more about the event can call 03-62035090 or visit www.fiabci2002.org

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