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By Sharen Kaur (/authors/sharen-kaur) - September 14, 2017 @ 6:39pm

TIN mining is one of the oldest industries in Malaysia.

Malaysia was the world's largest tin producer and supplied more than half of the world's tin until the mid-1980s when prices fell. By late 1980s, more than 300 tin mines ceased operations.

Former tin mining land was largely controlled by the government. After the closure of several tin mines, the government alienated some areas to private developers for tourism-related developments to boost the economy.

Hon Fatt Mines in Seri Kembangan was the world's largest open-cast tin mine – covering 530ha including the lakes.

It is now known as Mines Wellness City (formerly Mines Resort City). The government in 1988 alienated the land to Country Heights Holdings Bhd for recreational and tourism purposes.

Mines Wellness City is home to Palace of the Golden Horses, Mines Wellness Hotel, Golden Horses Health Sanctuary, Mines shopping mall, Mines Waterfront Business Park, Mines Resort and Golf Club, Mines Convention Centre and Heritage Residences.

Other former mining settlements which have become major tourism landmarks include Sunway Resort City (SRC) in Bandar Sunway and Kinta Valley in Perak.

The multi-billion-ringgit SRC started when founder Tan Sri Jeffrey Cheah Fook Ling had a vision of turning 350ha of tin mining wasteland into a vibrant city.

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Actual site photos of Silverlakes.

Kinta Valley is home to many lakes and a few are located in Silverlakes, an area being developed by Silverland Capital Sdn Bhd.

The company, controlled by Eastern & Oriental (E&O) Bhd chairman Datuk Azizan Abdul Rahman, offers an impressive architecture on 206ha of secluded lakes, flatlands and rainforest.

The master plan for the project is tourism-centric commercial, with a premium outlet and residential development that would generate a GDV of more than RM2 billion.

According to Azizan, Silverlakes will be a fully-integrated development that will emulate the success of E&O's lakeside gated-and-guarded

concept. "The most development focus is around 40 per cent, but we want to have more preserved for greenery and water bodies," Azizan told NST. "We will also build clubhouses in every enclave in the residential development."

McArthur + Company would preserve the open waters and raintrees, he said. "We will create a habitat for migratory birds and wildlife, to be enjoyed by all," said Azizan.

The first phase for Parcel A comprises an outlet mall (Silverlakes Brand Village) that will have 146 retail and food and beverage outlets, with 200,000 sq ft of net leasable area spread over 12 hectares. The development is located across the Batu Gajah Keretapi Tanah Melayu Bhd (KTM) station.

It will also have a carpark with 1,100 parking bays. Adjacent to it will be the eight-storey 200-room Ramada Hotel and a convention centre. Azizan is bullish on Silverlakes Brand Village as Kinta Valley is under-served by retailers.

The retailers at Silverlakes Brand Village will offer discounts of up to 70 per cent. Silverlakes Brand Village is the first-of-its-kind outlet village-type of lakeside mall and will be a major tourist attraction. It will be different from other outlet developments like Johor Premium Outlets and Mitsui Outlet Park KLIA.

"The only modern mall is Ipoh Parade. We believe that Silverlakes Brand Village will attract not only the population in Kinta Valley but also people from neighbouring states and overseas. We will have restaurants serving a variety of cuisine, while visitors can enjoy the lake view and walk around during day or night," said Azizan.

Dubai-based McArthur + Company will oversee the development and manage the leasing agreements and retail operations for a minimum period of 15 years upon its completion.

Azizan stressed that the key selling points for Silverlakes are not just the natural water bodies, rainforest and Silverlakes Brand Village, but also its location which is next to the Batu Gajah KTM electric train service (ETS) station.

"These trains leave Batu Gajah train station on a regular basis every day. One can reach Silverlakes in 100 minutes via the ETS from Kuala Lumpur. We expect this service to bring a lot of local and foreign tourists to Silverlakes."

"There will be easy access to Silverlakes from the Klang Valley and Penang, which have a combined population of about 10 million. The ETS is an excellent mode of transport for the tourist market."

Azizan hopes to capture about three to five per cent of the 30 million annual tourist arrivals when Silverlakes Brand Village is fully developed.

He said Ramada Hotel and the convention centre would turn Silverlakes Brand Village into an integrated tourism destination.

Year round, the company plans to host international events such as the Asian Jazz Festival, concerts, performing arts, vintage car exhibition, beauty pageant, international marathons and Ironman competitions to make Silverlakes Brand Village a tourist hot spot.

"The proposed new international airport in Ipoh is poised to serve regional routes such as Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand and China. This will see significant growth of inbound tourism for Silverlakes Brand Village which will, in turn, spur tourism activities in Kinta Valley," said Azizan.

Azizan.

SILVERLAKES AS KINTA VALLEY LANDMARK



Shop at Silverlakes Brand Village.

Silverland managing director Shaik Rizal Sulaiman said future developments in Silverlakes will be lifestyle-focused and attracting international interest.

The second phase of development for Parcel A (98.3ha) will be an eight-storey four-star business hotel with 200 rooms to be operated by Ramada, which is part of the Wyndham Hotel Group.

Wyndham is the world's largest and most diverse hotel company with about 7,500 hotels in its portfolio.

"We will also build residences on a 65-acre (26ha) landed area surrounding the lake with amenities and facilities to cater to residents and visitors. Parcel A will be the catalyst for the whole development. That is why we decided to develop the commercial part first to buzz things up," he said.

For Parcel B (45ha), Silverland will undertake the gated-and-guarded residential development comprising townhouses, lakeside and courtyard villas.

The target for this development are those living in Kinta Valley, holidaymakers, foreigners including those under the "Malaysia My Second Home" programme and local high-end retirement markets, said Shaik Rizal.

He said Parcel C will include a health resort and retirement village across 46.5ha, of which 50 per cent is water.

The Kinta private pool villa resort is planned as a higher end version of a resort retreat. It is estimated to have 88 units of luxurious pool villas with one to two bedrooms each.

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Wakes Brand Village is an attractive economic development strategy as it brings shoppers into a community through the creation of shopping attraction. These centres generate employment, sales and taxes for local authorities, and serve as a catalyst for other new spin-off business in the area," he added.

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