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THE upcoming N-City development in Sungai Petani, Kedah is poised to be the next commercial hub in the northern region.

Its developer NCT Group of Companies is banking on

the concept and location to make this a reality.

Group MD Datuk Seri Yap Ngan Choy is confident its concept, which includes dual-frontage shophouses, a convention hall with a capacity for 1,000 and a business hotel, will ensure the success of this development.

"This development will have a business lifestyle concept. It will be a new landmark in Sungai Petani. We have a unique design and the facade is modern. We will also bring in some famous F&B [food and beverage] brands," he tells **FocusM**.

The development, which sits on 8.09ha of leasehold land with a 99-year lease, has a gross development value of RM300 mil. "We chose this location as it is very prime. It fronts the main road, Jalan Bakar Arang, with the Giant and Tesco hypermarkets situated opposite it.

"There is also about 202.3ha of developed industrial land around it," he says.

NCT was set up by Yap with his brother, Fook Choy, in 1985 and sees itself as a boutique developer and contractor.

Shophouses

Yap says N-City will consist of three phases. The first phase will have 56 units and the second with 74 units of three-storey shophouses.

Both the corner units for phases one and two will be three-and-a-half storeys while the third phase will consist of 34 units of three-and-a-half storeys.

"The three-and-a-half storey shophouses come with lifts. The first phase will be completed two-and-a-half years

Northern region's next commercial hub

N-City development to fill vacuum for such needs in Sungai Petani south

down the road while phase two will be completed within three-and-a-half years and phase four in four years," says Yap.

The shophouses range in size between 20x70 sq ft and 40x70 sq ft with prices starting at RM1.15 mil and corner units beginning at RM3 mil.

He adds the shophouses come with double-volume ceilings up to 15 ft. "Basically you are paying for three-storeys but you are getting three-and-a-half-storeys in terms of space. This means that you can actually build your own mezzanine floor.

"It also has a dual-frontage concept. In Sungai Petani, there is only one shophouse development with such a concept," he says.

Dual-frontage concept

A dual-frontage concept, according to Yap, is one where the space in front of the shophouse is as wide as the road in front of it.

"The frontage lots can be used for F&B outlets and showrooms. You can have the al fresco concept for the F&B outlets there. People can sit outside and enjoy their coffee," says Yap.

The first phase is almost 40% sold even though the development has not been officially launched, with only a soft launch held on Nov 26.

There will also be a nine-storey multi-level elevated car park for visitors and tenants in the heart of the development, which will be connected to the shophouses and hotel via passageways.

Another major component of N-City is a four-star hotel which is expected to be completed within four years.

"We are aiming for it to be a business hotel. We are still looking at whether to run it or get an external party to do it," he says.

The hotel will have 204 rooms with a banquet hall, meeting rooms as well as a restaurant. He says the 25,000 sq ft three-storey convention hall with a sky terrace will be able to accommodate 1,000 people.

"It has two levels of exhibition halls and one level of designated parking space for exhibitors and guests.

"This is the only one of its kind in Sungai Petani," Yap says, adding that he expects this hall to be a great draw for investors based on feedback thus far from purchasers and potential investors.

Commercial hub

Explaining his plans to make N-City the next commercial hub of the north, Yap says the group expects the synergy of a convention hall, hotel, shophouses with modern facades as well as the ample parking bays to bring in the right mix of activities, eateries and retailers to the development.

"We are already pursuing 'branded' F&B outlets. We have sent invitations and information to show them the potential of this location and project.

"Maybe we will retain a portion of the shophouses to rent out to them," he says.

The company intends for this to be the hang-out spot for the Sungai Petani crowd once it is completed. "Most people go away to Juru or Penang during the weekends because there is nothing to do in Sungai Petani.

"I believe that with this concept, the hotel and the convention hall, people will stay back in Sungai Petani," he says.

Yap is confident that as long as the location is right and the concept attractive, buyers will be willing to invest no matter what state the economy is in.

He says that despite the sluggish property market at the moment he is confident this development will do well because of the company's record.

Location a plus point for N-City

THE strategic location of N-City is one of the plus points for this development, says New Bob Realty Sdn Bhd project sales head Ang Wei Cheong.

He says the project is located in south Sungai Petani, which is about three minutes' drive from the North-South Highway.

N-City will also support the Bakar Arang industrial area. "Bandar Amanjaya is the commercial hub in Sungai Petani north but for Sungai Petani south, this is the first commercial hub and is located nearer the highway.

"It is like the Juru Auto City in Perai, which is located in an industrial hub."

"There are no commercial hubs from Kepala Batas, Tikam Batu Sungai Petani, so this will be a hit," he says confidently.

Ang adds the development's concept is good, especially because of the convention hall. "There is no such convention hall like this in Sungai Petani.

"In the future, this will be the best location for weddings, expos and other events. Plus, it is in an industrial area and is ideal for property fairs, job fairs as well as food and beverage, industrial and furniture fairs," he says.

Ang adds the multi-storey car park in the development will also be a plus point. "When we buy property now, we always worry about parking and having this car park is convenient for the surrounding shophouses. Usually there are not enough car parks in commercial areas.

"Their interior design is also good with landscaped ponds and cafes near the convention hall," he says.



On the name 'N-City', Yap says that the 'NC' is derived from his name 'Ngan Choy'. "I started off as a tiling contractor and that is how the company's name became NCT. We chose to name this development N-City to follow the company's name," he says.

Yap says the group has over 12.1ha in Kampar, Perak. "With this and our projects in Genting Highlands, Salak Tinggi and Sungai Petani, we will be busy for at least four years.

"We will also look for other land concurrently in good locations," he adds.

