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Mayland Plans Hotel REIT Listing as Hospitality and Property Expansion Accelerates

Malaysia Land Properties Sdn Bhd (Mayland) plans to list a hotel real estate investment trust (REIT) on Bursa Malaysia by early 2027, with a potential secondary listing in Hong Kong. The REIT is expected to hold six or seven Dorsett hotels, targeting assets under management of RM1.3 billion. Mayland currently owns 11 hotels with 4,500 rooms and could also inject its 1,800 bed student accommodation in Subang.

Beyond the REIT, Mayland plans new hotels and resorts in tourist destinations including Langkawi and Sabah, alongside convention and training facilities. Hospitality contributes about a quarter of Mayland's revenue, while the company holds nearly 90 acres of undeveloped land with estimated GDV exceeding RM8 billion. Its ongoing projects in the Klang Valley and Johor Bahru have a combined GDV of RM1.5 billion, with Majestic Kiara achieving full take up.

Meanwhile, Land & General Bhd is expanding into industrial property through a 2,500 acre industrial park in Kerling. Its FY2026 net profit rose 38.7% to RM50.46 million, while net gearing remained low at 2.9%. The group also has RM618 million in unbilled sales and plans RM1.5 billion in new launches for FY2027, supporting further growth.

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Magma Completes Impiana KLCC Stake Sale to Strengthen Financial Position

Magma Group Bhd has completed the disposal of its 20% interest in Heritage Lane Sdn Bhd (HLSB), owner of the 519 room Impiana KLCC Hotel, for an estimated RM63 million in cash. The transaction forms part of HLSB's RM315 million sale to Harum Aspirasi Sdn Bhd, with the remaining 80% interest held by KLCC Holdings Sdn Bhd. The completion provides Magma with additional liquidity and reduces its exposure to a non core investment.

The hotel is valued at RM300 million on a going concern basis, compared with an audited net book value of RM205.97 million as at end 2024. Accordingly, Magma expects the disposal to generate a pro forma gain of about RM20.06 million, although the final amount remains subject to post completion adjustments based on HLSB's audited accounts and completion position.

Meanwhile, RM45 million of the proceeds is earmarked for debt repayment, RM12 million for investment in existing businesses and RM4.17 million for working capital, with RM1.83 million allocated for transaction expenses. The disposal therefore supports Magma's financial position while allowing capital to be redirected towards businesses with higher growth potential and returns.

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Domestic Travel Strengthens Hotel Demand with 70% Occupancy Expected Nationwide

Nationwide hotel occupancy is expected to average around 70% during the National Day and school holiday period from Aug 28 to Sept 7, supported by stronger domestic travel. Negri Sembilan is recording occupancy above 80%, while most states are around 70%. However, Kedah, Kelantan, Melaka, Sabah and Sarawak remain below 60%.

Meanwhile, resort hotels in Port Dickson are seeing stronger bookings, mainly from families seeking leisure breaks. A recent promotion by the Malaysian Association of Hotels, supported by Tourism Malaysia and an online travel agency, has also delivered encouraging results. More broadly, rising international airfares are encouraging Malaysians to choose affordable domestic destinations, while new tourism products continue to support local demand.

Family holidays, theme parks, resorts, staycations, outdoor activities and road trips remain popular, with demand spread across the country. Domestic tourism spending is expected to remain firm through the year, supported by sustained airfare pressures. In 1Q2026, 74.7 million domestic visitors contributed RM34 billion to the economy, while nearly 70% of Malaysian travellers favoured shorter getaways.

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Penang Hotels Target 80% Occupancy as Domestic and International Demand Grows

Penang hotels expect occupancy to reach 80% during the National Day and school holiday period, supported by firm domestic demand and rising foreign arrivals. Current occupancy averages around 60%, with bookings strengthening across both beach and city hotels. The Malaysian Association of Hotels (MAH) Penang chapter represents 114 members with 17,835 registered rooms.

Meanwhile, international demand is also improving, particularly from China and Indonesia, although domestic travellers remain the primary market. Resort hotels in Port Dickson and Penang are seeing stronger family and leisure bookings, while beachfront properties are gaining interest during the school holidays. Bookings have also started picking up ahead of the holiday period, pointing to sustained near term demand.

At the upper end, Shangri La Rasa Sayang Resort and Golden Sands Resort expect occupancy to exceed 90% as bookings continue to build. Overall, the extended holiday period is supporting hotel demand across Penang, with continued visitor interest benefiting different accommodation segments. This provides a positive outlook for hotel performance, particularly as both domestic and international travel demand remain resilient.

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Visa Malaysia Advances Payment Security as AI Driven Scams Become More Targeted

Artificial intelligence and automation are enabling faster, more targeted fraud in digital payments, while scams increasingly persuade consumers to authorise transactions themselves. In response, Visa Malaysia has launched its 2026 to 2028 Security Roadmap to strengthen Malaysia's digital payments ecosystem.

The roadmap sets six priorities covering cybersecurity, stronger authentication, tokenised payments, safer e-commerce checkouts, foundational standards and a resilient payments ecosystem. Building on frameworks introduced in 2019 and renewed in 2023, it provides market specific guidance for Visa and its partners. The shift towards authorised fraud is also making scams harder for financial institutions to detect and prevent.

Meanwhile, Visa is working with regulators, financial institutions, merchants and law enforcement to strengthen payment resilience and disrupt emerging threats. Its scam disruption efforts have helped disrupt more than 25,000 merchants and prevent over US$1 billion in fraud globally over 18 months. In addition, Visa has invested more than US$12 billion in technology over five years, including significant investment in fraud prevention and scam management technologies.

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MAHA 2026 Draws Strong Visitor Turnout and Sales Momentum in Opening Days

The Malaysia Agriculture, Horticulture and Agrotourism Exhibition (MAHA) 2026 recorded 1.8 million visitors and nearly RM6 million in sales within its first three days, indicating strong public and commercial interest. During the same period, 184,000 vehicles entered and exited the Malaysia Agro Exposition Park Serdang (MAEPS), resulting in heavy traffic around the exhibition grounds. The event is targeting at least RM58 million in total sales, with purchases such as crop seeds expected to contribute to the figure.

Meanwhile, the surge in attendance has prompted organisers to increase shuttle services and make further improvements where required. The relevant committee is also meeting daily to address visitor complaints and identify solutions to support smoother operations. Long queues at state pavilions have also led management to explore faster visitor transportation, particularly amid hot weather conditions.

The strong turnout was supported by various programmes throughout MAHA, including MAHA Merdeka, which featured fireworks and drone shows. Held from August 28 to September 6 at MAEPS, MAHA 2026 features about 2,000 exhibitors and is targeting more than four million visitors, supporting continued activity at the exhibition venue.

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AirAsia and Pegasus Airlines Strengthen Asia-Europe Travel Links Through Codeshare

AirAsia has launched its first codeshare partnership with Turkey's Pegasus Airlines, creating new connections between Southeast Asia and Europe through Istanbul. Initially, the arrangement will link Kuala Lumpur with five European destinations via Pegasus Airlines' hub at Istanbul Sabiha Gokcen Airport, while progressively expanding access to more than 100 routes between Asia and Europe. The partnership combines AirAsia's extensive Asean and Asian network with Pegasus Airlines' European coverage of 160 destinations across 56 countries.

In addition, AirAsia will increase its Kuala Lumpur to Istanbul service from four to seven flights weekly by February 2027, providing greater travel flexibility. AirAsia X has operated the route since November 2025, offering a direct connection between Southeast Asia and Turkey. Under the codeshare arrangement, passengers can book connecting journeys under one booking, with baggage checked through to their final destination, improving convenience and supporting smoother transfers.

The partnership also enables European travellers to connect through Istanbul and Kuala Lumpur into AirAsia's Fly Thru network across Asean, Asia and Australia. To mark the launch, promotional fares from Kuala Lumpur to the five destinations start from RM799. The fares are available through AirAsia MOVE from September 2 to 6 for travel until March 27, 2027, subject to terms and conditions.

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Emirates Expands Premium Economy Capacity in Kuala Lumpur with New A350

Emirates will deploy its new A350 aircraft on the Dubai to Kuala Lumpur route from September 1, expanding its Premium Economy offering in Malaysia to 52 seats daily. The A350 will operate alongside the retrofitted Boeing 777 on the route, while the airline's A380 services mean Malaysian travellers can access all three of Emirates' flagship aircraft types. The move also marks continued investment in the airline's Malaysian operations, which have now reached three decades.

The A350 features 32 lie flat Business Class seats in a 1 2 1 configuration, 28 Premium Economy seats and 238 Economy Class seats. In addition, Business Class customers will have wireless charging, while premium cabins feature electronic window blinds and digital inflight menus. The aircraft also offers Emirates' latest ice entertainment system with 4K and 4K HDR displays, alongside improved Wi Fi connectivity powered by ViaSat's Global Xpress satellite network.

Meanwhile, the Kuala Lumpur to Dubai service will provide a consistent Emirates product experience for travellers connecting through Dubai to destinations across Europe, the Middle East and North Africa and the Americas. Passengers can access more than 20 points across the airline's global network, including Istanbul, Lyon and Frankfurt, strengthening Kuala Lumpur's connectivity to international markets.

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Batik Air Opens Direct Penang-Batam Link to Expand Regional Tourism

Batik Air will launch direct flights between Batam and Penang from October 18, creating a new gateway for Penang to access Indonesia's Riau Islands tourism market. The route, the first scheduled direct air link between the two destinations, will operate three times weekly. Indonesia remains a key international tourism market for Penang, with 201,657 Indonesian tourists entering through Penang International Airport from January to July 2026, up 4.58% from 192,823 visitors in the same period last year.

Meanwhile, Batam is a major economic, industrial, commercial and tourism centre in the Riau Islands, located about 30km south of Singapore. The new service will therefore extend Penang's reach beyond established Indonesian markets such as Medan, Jakarta, Surabaya and Banda Aceh. In addition, the route is expected to support medical tourism by improving access to Penang's healthcare facilities and established medical tourism ecosystem.

The new connection also strengthens Penang's Southeast Asian air network, as short haul Asean markets continue to support tourism demand. Flight OD359 will depart Batam at 11.30am and arrive in Penang at 1.55pm, while OD358 will depart Penang at 10.10am and arrive in Batam at 10.50am. Ticket bookings are now open through Batik Air's official website.

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Batik Air to Resume Miri-Kuala Lumpur Flights Amid Strong Travel Demand

Batik Air has agreed to resume its Miri Kuala Lumpur services following a formal request, with the commencement date, flight frequency and schedule to be announced by the airline. The move responds to growing difficulty in securing flights, particularly during weekends, public holidays and peak travel periods when services are often heavily booked and fares increase due to limited seat availability. Batik Air was also urged to reassess the commercial viability of the route as travel demand between Miri and Kuala Lumpur remains strong.

Meanwhile, Miri's market potential extends beyond its population, serving northern Sarawak and neighbouring Brunei Darussalam. With suitable flight timings and competitive fares, the route could attract more Bruneian passengers using Miri as an alternative gateway to Kuala Lumpur and onward destinations. This broader catchment therefore supports the case for additional air capacity and improved regional connectivity.

The return of Batik Air is expected to provide passengers with more choices and ease pressure on seat availability during high demand periods. In turn, greater competition and additional capacity could support a more competitive airfare environment while strengthening Miri's wider economic and tourism activity. The airline will also be supported through engagement with tourism players, travel agents, business associations and other stakeholders in Miri and Brunei.

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AirBorneo Positions Kuching as Hub for Regional Connectivity and Network Growth

AirBorneo Airways plans to develop Kuching as a network hub connecting Sarawak's rural and urban communities with Sabah, Kalimantan, Peninsular Malaysia and regional markets. The airline will build from its existing Rural Air Services and turboprop network before expanding into domestic trunk routes and regional destinations. Inbound connectivity is expected to support tourism, investment, business, medical tourism and education. AirBorneo launched twice daily Kuching Kuala Lumpur services in July 2026, followed by daily flights to Singapore using wet leased Boeing 737 800 aircraft.

The network will initially cover Sarawak and Sabah before expanding to Indonesia, Peninsular Malaysia and Southeast Asia, with potential Indonesian destinations including Banjarmasin, Balikpapan, Pontianak, Bali and Surabaya. Longer term, the network could extend to southern China and Northeast Asia. AirBorneo also plans to serve both point to point and connecting passengers while considering interline and codeshare arrangements to broaden connectivity beyond its direct routes.

Meanwhile, AirBorneo has shared its five year growth plan with Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd, focusing on terminal expansion, optimisation and aircraft bay capacity at Kuching and other airports. As Kuching remains its base, infrastructure planning is a key focus. The airline will also differentiate its full service offering through Sarawak themed products, with funding for working capital, operating and capital expenditure already provided for the coming years.

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