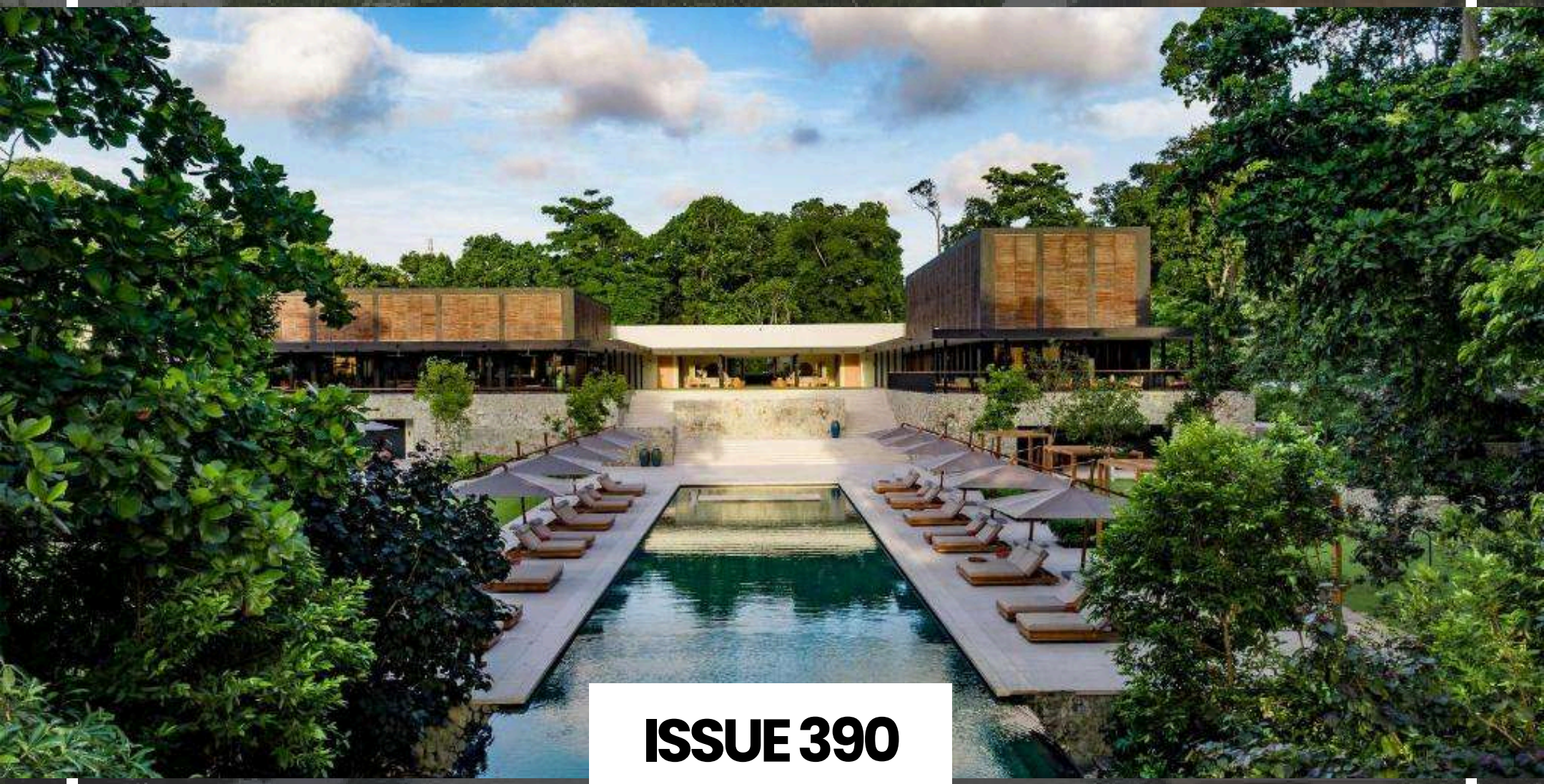
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Housing Ministry Drafts Uniform National Guidelines for Short Term Rental Accommodation



The Housing and Local Government Ministry, through PLANMalaysia, is drafting planning guidelines for short term rental accommodation with the Tourism, Arts and Culture Ministry, states and local authorities. The guidelines would serve as a uniform source of authority nationwide, and only registered premises complying with local authority licensing conditions would operate legally.

Strata premises remain subject to their management bodies' by laws under the Strata Management Act 2013. The government encourages platforms to verify licences before listing and to delist unlicensed or non compliant premises. Enforcement agencies can act against persistent operators under the Town and Country Planning Act 1976 and related laws, and can block illegal listings.

The document is in final review with the Tourism, Arts and Culture Ministry, and then goes to Cabinet and the National Council for Local Government before adoption. Penang has applied strata guidelines since 1 April 2023 and enforced by laws since 1 August 2026. A regulatory impact assessment on a possible 180 night cap is complete, and any cap must weigh income and tourism needs, prioritising public safety, order and residents' wellbeing.

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Sunway Healthcare and REIT Extend Hotel Sale Deadline to July 2027



Sunway Real Estate Investment Trust (Sunway REIT) and Sunway Healthcare Holdings have extended the deadline for the sale of Sunway Hotel Seberang Jaya to 28 July 2027, from 28 October 2026, in filings on 21 October. A supplemental agreement revises certain terms of the sale and purchase agreement dated 28 October 2025, while all other terms remain unchanged.

The sale price is RM60 million. The buyer is Sunway Medical Centre Penang, a wholly owned subsidiary of Sunway Healthcare, while RHB Trustees is seller as trustee for Sunway REIT. The property comprises a 4,294 square metre leasehold land parcel in Seberang Jaya, Penang, with the hotel building and its fixtures, fittings and equipment.

The extension gives Sunway REIT more time to meet the conditions needed for the deal to proceed, although the filings did not state which conditions remain outstanding. Under the revised terms, completion must take place within three months after all conditions are fulfilled or waived. Sunway Healthcare closed flat at RM2.09, valuing it at RM24 billion, while Sunway REIT closed unchanged at RM2.03, valuing it at RM6.95 billion.

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Low Family Renovates The Federal Kuala Lumpur to Preserve Its Heritage



The Low Yat Group is renovating The Federal Kuala Lumpur rather than rebuilding it, placing preservation of the hotel's history and the family's legacy first. The hotel opened on 28 August 1957, three days before Merdeka, as Malaysia's first international hotel. An 18 storey tower added in the 1960s lifted capacity to around 450 rooms.

The 1957 blueprints proved largely unhelpful on the 69 year old structure, so the team traced old mechanical and electrical lines, some embedded in solid concrete beams. Workers also removed up to four layers of flooring to reveal the original 1957 mosaic tiles. Phase one is complete, with the former lobby converted into future retail space, a new guest lounge added and the lobby relocated into the original tower block.

Phase two, slated to begin in 2027, will split the property into two entities: the original Federal KL and an international hotel brand occupying the 18 storey tower. The Mandarin Palace stays unrenovated to protect its 1957 craftsmanship but remains available for events. Fourth generation custodian Low Kian Leong was involved in the restoration.

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Regional Airports Lead International Passenger Growth While Group Domestic Traffic Softens



Malaysia Airports Holdings' non core airports recorded higher passenger traffic in September, even as movements across the group's local network softened. Subang (Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah Airport) handled 59,000 international passengers, up 24.1% year on year, while Ipoh (Sultan Azlan Shah Airport) recorded 31,000, up 16.6%. Penang International Airport saw 348,000 international passengers, up 5.3%, about 57% of its total for the month.

Kota Bharu (Sultan Ismail Petra Airport) handled 5,000 international passengers after new international routes launched in June. Its expanded terminal, opened in April, raised annual handling capacity from 1.5 million to 4 million passengers. For the first nine months of 2026, the group's Malaysian airport operations handled 75.2 million passengers, down 2.4% year on year, while international traffic grew 4.5% to 41.3 million.

Managing director Datuk Mohd Izani Ghani said the results show the importance of strengthening regional connectivity, adding that airports such as Subang, Ipoh and Penang have an important role in expanding Malaysia's international connectivity. He said the group wants to work with airlines and tourism stakeholders to develop routes that support Malaysia's tourism goals.

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September Traffic Eases Across Malaysia Airports While KLIA Keeps Service Standards High



Passenger movement across Malaysia Airports Holdings' local network fell about 12% year on year in September to about 7.8 million. Domestic movements dropped 21.8% to 3.4 million, while international volume dipped 2.2% to 4.3 million.

Kuala Lumpur International Airport handled about 4.9 million passengers. Sun PhuQuoc Airways began flights to Phu Quoc on 1 September, and Gulf Air began direct flights from Bahrain on 30 September, making it the 10th Middle Eastern carrier serving the airport. Passenger satisfaction reached 98.8% at Terminal 1 and 99.4% at Terminal 2, while cleanliness satisfaction exceeded 99% at both terminals and washroom inspections showed full compliance with standards. Security queues were cleared within 10 minutes for virtually all passengers, and the Aerotrain met its service standards throughout September.

For the first nine months of 2026, Malaysian airport operations handled 75.2 million passengers, down 2.4%, while international traffic grew 4.5% to 41.3 million, a gain the article links to Visit Malaysia 2026. Managing director Datuk Mohd Izani Ghani said airports such as Subang, Ipoh and Penang have an important role in expanding Malaysia's international connectivity.

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Domestic Tourism Holds Firm as Haze Shifts Itineraries and Trims Group Tours



Domestic tourism remains healthy despite haze disrupting some inbound tours, and industry players hope conditions improve before the December holiday season. The Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents president Nigel Wong said bookings and trips have seen no significant impact. Some tourists postponed visits or changed itineraries, and agents swapped outdoor excursions for indoor attractions where needed.

The Malaysian Inbound Tourism Association president Mint Leong said haze affected inbound group tours, with about 30% of November group tours cancelled, excluding individual travellers. Impact varied by destination, with travel in Langkawi and Genting Highlands continuing without significant disruption.

Malaysian Tourism and Travel Agents president Muhammad Syazri Afiq Rosli said outdoor sightseeing, nature excursions and island activities are most vulnerable, and the effect could reach tour guides, transport providers and small businesses. It is too early to say whether this episode is worse than earlier ones, as comparable data is lacking. Mr Wong cautioned that prolonged haze could harm Malaysia's tourism reputation over time. Duration, affected destinations and transport disruptions will determine the extent of the impact.

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Visit Johor Campaign Extends Into 2027 as State Nears 12 Million Target



The Visit Johor 2026 campaign will run into 2027, the state Menteri Besar announced at a town hall with industry players in Johor Bahru on 26 October. The state wants the extension to boost the economic and tourism sectors. It aligns with Visit Malaysia 2026, which has been extended to the end of 2027. Industry players asked for more time to cope with global economic pressures and a Middle East conflict that raised airfares and disrupted travel.

Johor recorded 4.7 million overnight visitors from January to June and is on track to reach its target of 12 million overnight visitors this year. The state spent RM187 million this year on building and upgrading tourism products. It expects to spend at least another RM50 million next year.

The state unity, heritage and culture committee chairman said extension details will be announced at the Johor Budget presentation in November. The Menteri Besar also noted that the Rapid Transit System Link between Johor Bahru and Singapore is expected to begin operating in February 2027

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Penang Welcomes Five Maiden Cruise Calls Totalling 11,012 Passenger Capacity



Five international cruise ships will make maiden calls at Swettenham Pier Cruise Terminal in George Town between October and December 2026, with combined passenger capacity of 11,012. They are Navigator of the Seas, Villa Vie Odyssey, Adora Mediterranea, Star Seeker and Celebrity Solstice. Navigator of the Seas arrives first on 30 October.

Penang Port Commission chairman Datuk Yeoh Soon Hin said the industry is entering a new phase of high quality growth. The Transport Minister supports upgrading the surrounding waterfront, enhancing terminal facilities and improving links to George Town's tourism areas, with a long term vision of an international cruise homeport.

The Tourism, Arts and Culture Ministry is focusing on international visitor experiences through Visit Malaysia 2026 and the Mesra Malaysia hospitality programme, while Tourism Malaysia has expanded its matching grant programme to include the cruise sector this year. The Penang Port Commission and Tourism Malaysia will organise welcome activities, including cultural performances, Penang themed souvenirs and tourism promotion. Mr Yeoh said positive experiences ashore and favourable word of mouth can encourage return visits

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Lufthansa Returns to Kuala Lumpur With Five Weekly Non Stop Frankfurt Flights



ILufthansa launched its non stop Kuala Lumpur to Frankfurt service at Kuala Lumpur International Airport on 27 October, restoring a direct link after nearly a decade. Flights operate five times a week all year round using a Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner, described as among its most modern and efficient long haul aircraft.

The Tourism, Arts and Culture Minister said the launch comes as Malaysia advances its Visit Malaysia 2026 to 2027 campaign, and that the route would strengthen the airport as a gateway between Southeast Asia and Europe. Malaysia Airports Holdings managing director Datuk Mohd Izani Ghani said the return widens Malaysia's reach to European cities beyond its direct network, stressing commercially sustainable services.

Malaysia welcomed 42.2 million visitors last year, up 11.16%. About 1.18 million European visitors arrived in the first eight months of this year, up 1.2% from 1.16 million a year earlier, and 116,824 German visitors were recorded in that period. Malaysia is connected to Europe by 57 flights per week, with capacity of 16,914 seats, and more than 700 German companies operate in the country.

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