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CLOSE PROXIMITY:

Company eyeing business from surrounding multinational corporations in Bayan Lepas Free Industrial Zone

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PROPERTY developer SP Setia Bhd is banking on its convention facilities at the Subterranean Penang International Convention and Exhibition (SPICE) development to support the growth of its planned four-star business class hotel on the island.

The company's general manager (north) Ng Han Seong said once the 455-room hotel was ready by 2019, it would tap into the business of the surrounding multinational corporations operating in the Bayan Lepas Free Industrial Zone.

"Construction of the RM350 million hotel is expected to take off by March. Once completed, we will either operate and manage the hotel ourselves or get a hotel management company to do it for us," he said.

With a proximity of 1.5km to the Penang International Airport and the Bayan Lepas Free Industrial

Zone close by, Ng said the 25-storey hotel would serve as the final component of the 10.1ha SPICE project.

In 2011, in a pact signed between the then Penang island Municipal Council and SP Setia's subsidiary Eco Meridian, it was agreed that the proposed SPICE will feature a basement car park and a green park on the rooftop.

The project which comprises a 2.8ha public park, will also include refurbishing, repairing and upgrading of what used to be the Penang International Sports Arena and the Aquatic Centre, as well as a new hotel and retail outlets.

The Setia SPICE Aquatic Centre, which has been refurbished at a cost of RM16 million, consists of badminton courts, squash courts, swimming pools and a children's water theme park — all equipped with

green technology and a RM4 million solar energy system.

Meanwhile, Ng said the RM284 million SPICE Arena, when completed by year-end, would be Penang's biggest convention centre, which would boast a 48,900 sq ft ballroom and 20,300 sq ft pre-function area.

"We have been promoting the venue at destinations like Las Vegas, Bangkok and Melbourne," he said, adding that the international-standard convention centre will boast a green roof, which would serve as a public recreational area.

"The 2.3ha green roof will incorporate a children's play area, jogging space and a 0.60ha bamboo garden."

Meanwhile, the project's RM28 million beverage and retail space, known as SPICE Canopy, has opened its doors with 9,100 sq m of rental space.

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