

## NAIM, CMS TO DEVELOP SAMALAJU NEW TOWNSHIP WITH BDA



Deal Wei (Left), Mohidin and Curtis exchanging documents during the momerandum of understanding between their three corporations at a leading hotel to undertake the development of houses in Samalaju.

**Kuching :** Naim Holdings Bhd. (NAIM) and Cahya Mata Sarawak Bhd. (CMS) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) yesterday with Bintulu Development Authority(BDA) to propose to the government of Sarawak to undertake township and housing development at Samalaju Industrial Park.

Signing on behalf of BDA was general manager Datu Mohidin Ishak, with Naim's executive director Datuk William Wei and CMS Group's managing director Datuk Richard Curtis present as well to represent their corporations. This joint venture between naim, CMS and BDA seeks to develop and operate temporary camps and facilities for construction workers involved in the businesses locating to Samalaju Industrial park to support the Sarawak Corridor of Renewable Energy (SCORE).

Mohidin said that he was happy with this partnership as it signified another stepping stone for the development of Bintulu. "We are very happy to be part of this signing with CMS and NAIM as Bintulu is an area where SCORE is being planned vigorously, " he said. " We are working very closely with each other to provide housing for both general and executive workers in Samalaju.

"It is to our belief that a new township will be required to provide the housing capacity and utilities necessary to accommodate the demand of workers required which

is estimated to be approximately 5,000 employees of industries and supporting businesses locating to Samalaju.

“The government has approved about 2,000 hectares for a new township. In addition, we also expect the first few industries to commence work with SCORE such as the polysilicon plant which would begin construction next year. These alone would require about 20,000 workers or 50,000 if we include their families,” highlighted Mohidin. Curtis commented that Sarawak adopted international standards for SCORE and by undertaking the MoU , the parties aim to adhere to said high standards. “SCORE is a major project to undertake as much skills and technical expertise are required to begin and maintain it,” he noted. “We aim not only to bring in more foreign workers to further develop SCORE but also to impart these skills to the local workers.”

Wei added, “This project will be conducted in several stages. The first stage will allow for temporary housing to accommodate workers, which is expected to last between 5 to 10 years depending on the workforce.”

Speaking on the reason why this township was a crucial development point for SCORE, Curtis opined, “It is unreasonable to expect workers to commute between Samalaju and nearby towns such as Miri and Sibul as we always need some workers on site to manage logistics and conduct field work.

“Therefore, it is a win-win situation for all to develop the said housing area within Samalaju with NAIM taking the lead on this project.”

Mohidin concluded that as more industries continue to permeate and participate in SCORE project, the parties will collaborate with the government to establish schools,clinics, police stations and so forth to support the proposed township.

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