



Timber: The 21st century's favoured building material

It is time in Malaysia to relook the use of timber in architecture as the world moves towards changing building code regulations to accommodate timber high-rises. This was the theme message conveyed by the panel of speakers at the Malaysian Timber Council's (MTC) International Conference on Wood Architecture in Kuala Lumpur on 9 November 2017.

MTC's panel of speakers for the conference included Andrew Waugh, Norihide Imagawa, Kevin Hill and Boris Iskra, who are world renowned architects and engineers. Malaysian architects Almaz Salma Abdul Rahim and Azman Mohd Nor, who were the first and second prize winners respectively of MTC's inaugural Malaysian Wood Awards 2017, spoke on their winning designs as well as on their other timber-based structures.

Following the success of its first international conference on Wood Architecture in 2015, MTC organized the second edition not only to promote the use of timber and timber products but to highlight the need to change the mind-sets of those in the construction industry especially that of architects, engineers, developers and builders.

Deputy Minister of the Plantation Industries & Commodities YB Datuk Datu Nasrun Datu Mansur officiated at the opening ceremony on behalf of the Minister YB Datuk Seri Mah Siew Keong. Also present was MTC Chief Executive Officer Datuk Dr Abdul Rahim Nik. About 400 participants, comprising architects, engineers, developers, academicians and architecture students attended the conference.

"There are clear-cut advantages to using timber as it speeds up the construction process which result in cost-saving measures. In Europe, four-storey buildings can be built every three days. Technological advancements have also led to the creation of engineered timber products which have a protective charring layer that enables it to maintain its structural integrity unlike steel which buckles under intense heat," said Datuk Dr Abdul Rahim.

The speakers highlighted the advantages of using timber which is now the star building material of the 21st century and how Malaysian architects can mirror the accomplishments of their European counterparts who have been successful in constructing high-rise timber buildings.

MTC also held a mini exhibition in conjunction with the conference to showcase products such as doors, flooring, decking, panel products, mouldings and glulam from 10 local manufacturers to enable specifiers and users to know what is available in the market. To find out more about MTC, please visit www.mtc.com.my.

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