

# NOW Conference kicks off today

It identifies new directions, potentials in architecture in a changing world

By Roznah Abdul Jabbar

Participants will gain a wealth of knowledge at the NOW Conference – Season 1 taking place today as part of the Malaysia Architecture, Interior Design and Building Exhibition (Archidex) from June 30 to July 3 at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre.

Boon Chee Wee, president of Pertubuhan Akitek Malaysia (PAM), organiser of the NOW Conference, said the two-day event features lectures by established and emerging architects and designers with a divergent range of approaches and interests from the region and internationally.

The conference, previously known as Datum:KL, remains the principal anchor event for Archidex 2011 which showcases the latest in architec-

ture, interior design and the building industry.

"NOW implies immediacy – the immediacy to identify new directions and new potentials," Boon said.

According to him, at a time when architecture seeks new directions and new beginnings, the debut conference seeks to examine and describe key trajectories of thinking and practices, and to underline the essential transformative aspects of architecture as a critical instrumentality to engage a continually changing world.

"The new conference will also have a refreshed and updated format but will leave intact the things that have worked well in the past."

Among the speakers are Datuk Seri Idris Jala, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department; and Cameron Sinclair, executive direc-

tor and co-founder of Architecture for Humanity.

The others include Marc Simmons, founding partner of Front Inc and a faculty member at the Princeton University School of Architecture; Laurence Loh of Akitek LLA; and Hiroshi Nakamura of Hiroshi Nakamura & NAP Architects, Japan.

"This year, we also reconnect with some of our original speakers who over the years have risen in stature and profile alongside Datum:KL," Boon said.

He noted last year's conference attracted over 2,500 participants, an increase of over 10 per cent. They included architects, designers and allied building professionals, students and academia, developers as well as government authorities and institutions from Asia Pacific

and beyond.

It has established itself as the event of the industry and is now the largest architectural event of its kind in the region.

He added the NOW Conference is also held in conjunction with the Asean Architect Congress 2011.

Archidex 2011 is the highlight of the inaugural Datum:KL – Kuala Lumpur Architecture Festival, a month-long multiprogramme event by PAM that runs through July to celebrate architecture, design and the KL city.

Meanwhile, the Green Building Forum and Kuala Lumpur Design Forum were held at Archidex 2011 yesterday.

Boon said Archidex 2011 will also feature the second Building Industry Gala Night tomorrow, an event to cel-



With over 31,700 visitors from 50 countries, Archidex 2010 won the Malaysian Association of Convention & Exhibition Organisers & Suppliers Award 2011 for Industry Excellence and Best Trade Exhibition.

celebrate the achievements of the industry where building professionals, developers and business leaders will get a chance to relax in a casual carnival setting of food, drinks, games, live music and networking.

Other events at Archidex 2011 include the New Product Award, Green New Product Award, Designers' Day, Architects' Day, Green Biz@Archidex, Expose@Archidex, Datum:KL Workshops and PAM Convention Archidex 2011 Golf.

Boon said more than 8,638 architects, designers and developers as well as a total of over 31,700 visitors from 50 countries visited Archidex 2010, which won the Malaysian Association of Convention & Exhibition Organisers & Suppliers Awards 2011 for Industry Excellence and Best Trade Exhibition.

"Archidex 2011 promises to be the largest showcase ever of products, services and ideas for the architecture, interior design and building industry," he added.