



BY ALYSSA J. OON

Basic boosters

> Simple makeovers to put appeal back into interiors that have lost its charm

HAVE you ever experienced a day when suddenly the cosy ambiance of home does not seem comforting anymore? Once perfect interiors appear two-bit; cobwebs sitting in the corners of the ceiling and the water stains on the sofa and wooden furniture are all of a sudden staring at your face; and mind you, the once attractive and simply soothing colour theme of home interiors now looks hideous and has become almost unbearable.

A home that does not evoke feelings of warmth, comfort, contentment and joy obviously needs serious thought. If the home is sending you these signals, fret not. You can restore that once charming and alluring appeal to interiors with just a few tweaks here and there. And the beauty of it is that these simple solutions can be accomplished over the weekend.

CLUTTER BE GONE

We'll start with the basics, which is decluttering. While some people can think better creatively in a messy space, for others it poses a distraction. Various studies have shown that clutter steals your focus, increases stress levels and contributes to procrastination, among other negative consequences.

Declutter the home bit by bit, room by room. Have boxes or plastic bags on hand for the stuff that needs to be thrown out or packed for recycling. When starting out in each room, reach in to hidden spaces including drawers and shelves settled with dust that you can't recall when you last opened. Empty these and have all its contents in clear view. Lay down guidelines on items to keep and toss out. Some important areas to work on to regain the lure of home include:

▶ **Kitchen:** leftover or expired food; kitchen and cooking utensils or dinnerware sets that have been a little too well-used; and expired medications which should be brought to hospitals or clinics for disposal and not dumped into the bin.



PHOTO: ZULUZYLE.CO

- ▶ **Home office:** old and unused stationery; useless old bills, mail and paperwork; and unusable cables and knick-knacks that can be recycled.
- ▶ **Bedroom:** old or unused clothing, shoes and jewellery; old books and magazines that will never be read again, which can be donated, recycled or thrown out.
- ▶ **Living room:** souvenirs from bygone eras that do not rekindle a pleasant memory; broken remote controls; old CDs, DVDs, cassettes, VCR tapes; and unused or outdated decorative pieces that do not match interior's theme, including items you can't figure out for the life of you what they are.
- ▶ **Bathroom:** old and unused toiletries; excessive or disorganised supply of toilet paper rolls and towels; old toothbrushes and pearly white products; and expired beauty products.

washing machine. Complete by rinsing off the cleaning solutions.

Move on to the bedroom, with vacuuming and then wiping down the walls and ceilings, followed by dusting off. Strip the bed of linens and the windows of its frills and fancies to be washed. Open up the windows while cleaning them, as it also works to air out the mattress and pillows. If there are any large area rugs or wall-to-wall carpeting in the room, look into hiring a professional to get these properly steamed and cleaned.

Next up is the kitchen. Start off by cleaning out the refrigerator and freezer. Next, wash its shelves and compartment trays; and do not forget to wipe the door seal to remove any crumbs or debris. Scrub down the stove, oven and other cooking appliances to remove the build-up of grease and stains. The same goes for counter surfaces and cabinets - not forgetting knobs and handles. A mixture of warm water and dishwashing detergent should work when scrubbing off grease. Complete the purge and cleansing by sweeping, vacuuming and mopping the floor.

Last stop is the living area. Begin by cleaning the fans and ceilings. While using a duster seems natural, keep dust from flying about by using an old pillowcase instead; simply slip the pillowcase over the fan blade, then wipe the dust off and into the pillowcase. Move on to vacuuming and wiping the walls, cleaning cooled-down lightbulbs with a damp microfibre cloth, washing lampshades and lighting covers. Give all furniture a wipe. Lastly, vacuum, sweep and mop under all furniture and furnishing.

FRESH COAT OF PAINT

Painting over something is the cheapest and oldest trick in the book. There is nothing a fresh coat of paint cannot cover up, and pretty much everyone can paint! However, some planning is required before you take that brush to the walls.

Start by deciding if you want to stay safe and strike out with an accent wall or go bold with an entire room. Then decide which colours would work. Different colours can change the entire mood of a space, so it is important to pick the right shades and tones, depending on the room. While shopping for paint, take home colour cards and tape them to your wall to visualise how it will look or use a colour app. Most paint companies have developed apps that help consumers visualise and decide on colours for various parts of their homes.

Now, paints also come in different sheens for use in different areas of the home. Matte paint, for example, is perfect for low-traffic areas and hides imperfections. High traffic and wet areas, on the other hand, should be painted with gloss or semi-gloss paint, as they are easy to clean and are reflective, which help in distributing natural lighting around the room.

Important note: when painting interiors, do not skip on primer. It helps cover imperfections on the surface and provides a longer-lasting finish.

RE-ORGANISING LAYOUTS

Sometimes, just a simple nudge of the couch or reshuffling about of the furniture can change the entire image of a room. Especially if a recent decluttering session was done, a re-organisation of the room



PHOTO: IHEARTORGANIZING.BLOGSPOT.COM



PHOTO: WEHATETOWASTE.COM

is in order. If possible, move out all or most of the furniture in the room and put them back in, not necessarily all. It is easier to visualise and plan a new arrangement when the room has been cleared of visual obstructions.

Start by bringing in the anchor pieces, such as the bed or the couch, or any other large furniture. Once the bigger items are in place, it is easier to organise the other smaller ones around these huge pieces.

If you want the room to feel spacious, keep furniture items roughly three to four inches away from the walls. This creates the illusion of the wall being farther away. For rooms that are often used, consider the flow of traffic when planning the arrangement. Paths should be kept clear of obstacles and movement should centre around anchor pieces, rather than through them.

Sort your possessions into similar groups and store these individual collections of items together in one area using baskets or boxes. This method of organisation ensures that everything is in its proper place, further reducing the build-up of clutter.

Simple works to refresh the home can be DIY-ed. Avoid heavier alterations that require the expertise of professionals, such as plumbing, electrical and structural works like installing kitchens, water features and indoor ponds. While including plants and greenery could add a lovely touch to interiors, they can also make or break the entire look if not precisely selected and meticulously placed.

THOROUGH CLEANING

Tackling the dust and grime of the home is another way to make it sparkle like brand new. Oprah.com writer Lynn Andriani has a room-by-room guide that settles the home in one day - eight hours, to be exact.

Start in the morning with the bathroom by vacuuming and then wiping the walls and ceilings. Follow by spraying and soaking shower walls, tubs, floors and sinks with cleaning agents. While the solutions are working their magic, haul up any throw rugs, shower curtains, window drapery and floor mats and toss them into the



PHOTO: WWW.BHG.COM



PHOTO: WWW.WEHATETOWASTE.COM



PHOTO: WWW.LELEDECOR.COM

▶ Email your feedback and queries to: propertyqs@thesundaily.com



PROPERTY insights

Property in the suburbs

LIVING in bustling cities that present tons of opportunities may seem the perfect environment for busy millennials focused on climbing up the corporate ladder, those pursuing to build a worthy career, as well as professionals already living out their successful lifestyles and pursuits. These goals and ideals have indeed attracted a massive influx into the urban regions and metropolitan cities, thus, driving property prices skywards and in many capitals, making land scarce. However, there was talk that people were more interested in improving lifestyles and moving to suburbs and rural areas where “the idea was” – bigger property, more spacious living areas and cheaper real estate.

With that, Tensui Khow from iProperty data services decided to examine stats and figures to receive insight. Apparently, the statistics department recorded the highest net outflow of migrants in 2015, amounting to 32.3k, from Kuala Lumpur, while the largest net inflow of migrants in 2015 was in Selangor, amounting to 22.7k people.

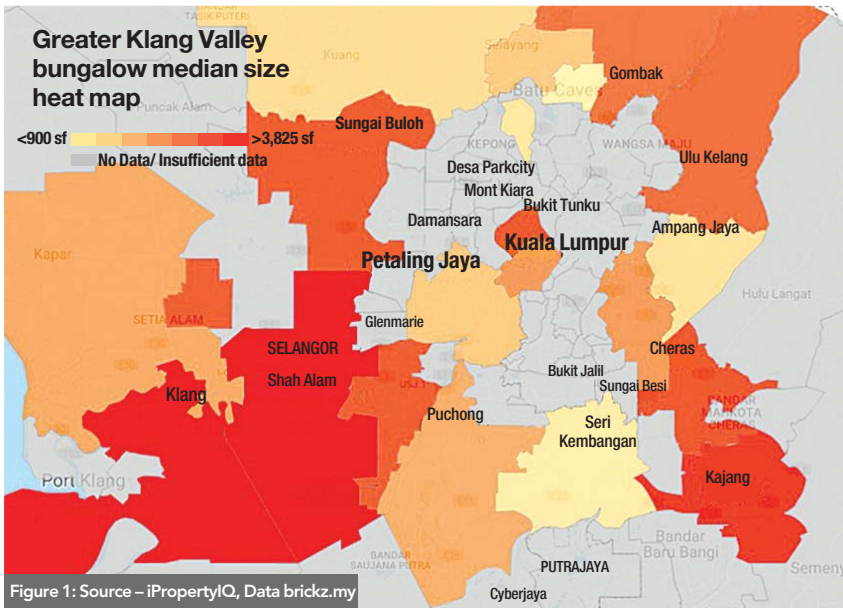
Trying to put a finger on some of the matters of concern and prerequisites that attracted people out into living in the suburbs and rurals, *theSun* highlights interesting and valuable information from Khow’s research, retrieved via collaboration between brickz.my and iPropertyIQ.

Size matters

> Does living in the suburbs and rurals necessarily equate to larger and less pricey property?



PHOTO: IPROPERTY.COM



[For figure 1, 2 and 3 the darker the colour, the larger the size while in figure 4, the darker colour indicates the higher price, by per square foot.]

THE CASE FOR BUNGALOWS

Figure 1 does show significant evidence that the median size of property is bigger out of Kuala Lumpur City Centre and Petaling Jaya. Shah Alam and Klang holds the highest median size in the whole country with 3,825sf and 3,664sf respectively. Next to it on the southeast border we have Kajang and Cheras, with a median size of 3,466sf and 3,312sf respectively. Sungai Buloh with 3,264sf, and Ulu Kelang and Gombak with 3,122sf and 3,065sf respectively.

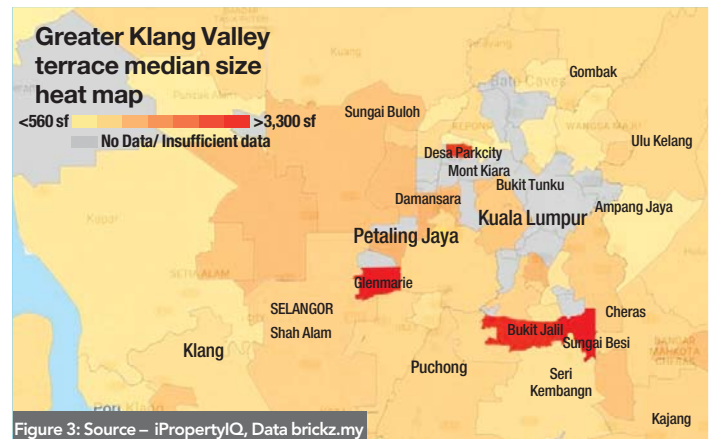
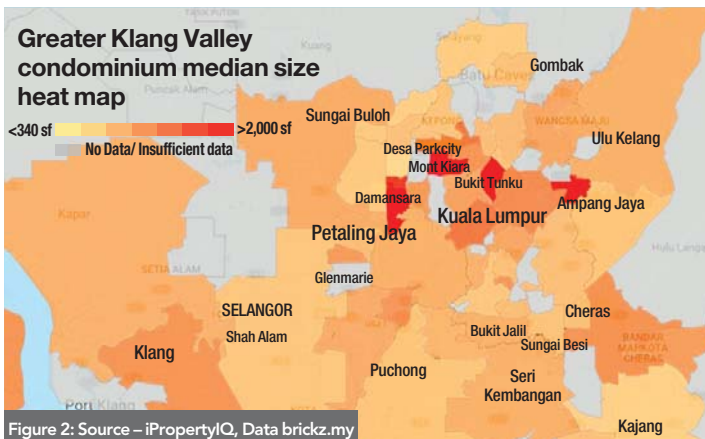


PHOTO: IPROPERTY.COM

THE IMPACT ON CONDOMINIUMS

Examining if the same holds true for condominiums, the data showed that the biggest properties were found near city centres (Figure 2) and as one moved farther out of the city, there was no difference. It was gathered that this was due to the fact that there is more land outside the city, thus no need for high rise living spaces. The number of transactions for condominiums also decreased away from the city centre. Places like Bukit Tunku,

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ▶



PROPERTY insights



► FROM PAGE 21

Ampang and Mont Kiara reported having the largest condominium sizes within Kuala Lumpur City Centre while Damansara Utama and Mutiara Damansara comprised the most spacious condominiums in the Petaling Jaya area.

THE EFFECT ON TERRACE HOUSES

In the case of terrace houses (Figure 3), Bukit Jalil, Sungai Besi, Glenmarie, Desa Park City and Cyberjaya recorded the highest median sizes. These are located in areas surrounding cities offering higher paying jobs. As one moves farther out, away from the city, there was no difference in the median size of terrace houses, compared to in the city.

Khow then wanted to find out if the prices of property differed between those in the city and in the rural. By doing a quick plot on the psf (Figure 4), it was noticed that prices did drop for terraces that were out of the city. The conclusion was that while **terrace houses were cheaper as one moved farther out of the city, incomes did not substantiate for the roomier properties** (income in the city centre far outweighed that in rural areas).

Hence, even though terrace houses are cheaper in rural areas, the people there cannot afford larger properties (derived from the map showing bigger sized terrace houses located beside Petaling Jaya, Kuala Lumpur City Centre and Putrajaya where most of the high

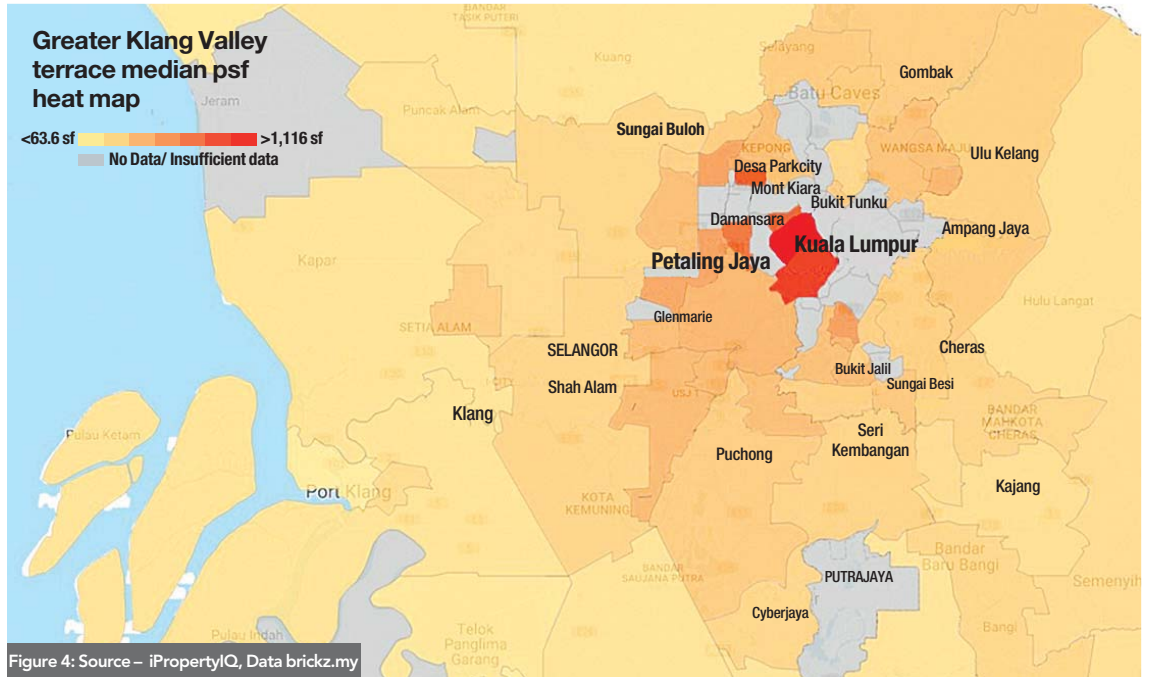


Figure 4: Source – iPropertyIQ, Data brickz.my

paying jobs are).

The gist of Khow's research - having provided the analysis by building type and examining the property size - **hungalows do get bigger as we move farther out into the rural areas. As for**

terrace houses and condominiums, as we move out into the suburbs, the size does get bigger but moving farther out into the rural areas, the size actually decreases.

Although the numbers and

mapping technology cannot be taken as "fait accompli", the data provides reason to believe that more people are seeking to move out of the city and into suburbs and rural areas. Follow part two of Khow's research next week

sharing more interesting findings and insights.

► Email your feedback and queries to: propertyqs@thesundaily.com

Double Storey Terrace Houses
Built-up area: from 2,225 sqft Price: from RM373,000

20'x75'180'

Phase 7-3(1)

Living in the Midst of Nature

Completed with CCC Phase 7-3(2)

Completed with CCC Phase 6-1A(1)

Double Storey Terrace Houses Standard lot size: 24'x80' Price: from RM480,000 Built-up area: from 2,625 sqft

Double Storey Semi-Detached Standard lot size: 40'x90' Price: from RM 860,000 Built-up area: from 3,375 sqft

- Special Feature**
- 1,254 acres of integrated township development
 - 2 recreational lake parks (32 acres Eco Park 1 and 24 acres Eco Park 2)
 - A green leafy pleasant suburb with Ipoh City's charm
 - Security features
 - Located approximately 4km from Simpang Pulai interchange
 - Practical and functional design with renovation free concept
 - Freehold virgin land

SHOWHOUSES OPEN FOR VIEWING
Weekday (10am-6pm) • Weekend / Public Holiday (10am-7.30pm)

Prestigious development by **taiko GROUP** Developer **PINJI BOTANICS SDN. BHD.** (121074-A) www.bandarseribotani.com
No. 1, Jalan Zarib 8, Zarib Industrial Park, 31500 Ipoh, Perak. Tel: 05-323 6622(hunting lines) Fax: 05-322 2668/323 6633 **05-323 6622**

Phase 7-3(1) Developer's License: 9429-3401-2018(006/1) Validity Period: 07.01.2016 - 06.01.2018 Advertising Permit: 9429-3401-2018(006/P) Validity Period: 07.01.2016 - 06.01.2018 Approving Authority: Malle Bandaraya Ipoh MBR Approved Plan No: 88 (14.801-001)20803215 PDP/PO/LO Land Tenure: Freehold Land Encumbrance: Nil Expected Completion Date: May 18 Lot: 304x90(DSTH), 1st(DSTH) Selling Price: RM371,506-RM1,054,745(DSTH), RM1,090,000(DSE), 5% / 7% (Phase 7-3(1)) discount for bidders on bidders lot. CCC - Certificate of Completion & Compliance.

Find Out more **PROMOTION package*** for Completed Phases from us
* Terms & conditions apply

■ Property in the suburbs

Length and breadth of property dimensions

> Correlation between property size in the city, suburbs and rural areas against population density and household income

CONTINUING from our previous article on the subject of the size of property in the city, suburbs and rural areas, below are additional interesting insights from Tensui Khow's article, with stat charts from iPropertyIQ and brickz.my

- Briefly, last week's two-page article highlighted the fact that:
- ▶ the dimensions of bungalows increases farther out of the city (suburbs and rural areas);
 - ▶ from the city to the suburbs, the size of terrace houses and condominiums increases; but
 - ▶ from the suburbs to the rural areas, the size of terrace houses and condominiums actually decrease.

DEEPER LOOK ON A BROADER SCALE

This week, we explore Khow's discovery: "that terrace houses are cheaper as one moves farther out of the city, but incomes do not substantiate for the bigger properties (income in the city centre far outweighs that in rural areas)".

***Observing population**

Wanting to find the inter-connection between the size of property and incomes, Khow manages to retrieve data, providing insights on the various states, population density per sq km and the price on the average terrace size per sf in our currency.

Khow's findings revealed:

A) Average size of terrace houses (considering the average size of terrace houses by state):

- ▶ Putrajaya to have the largest average terrace house size with 1,900 sf;
- ▶ next to it is Sarawak with 1,359 sf;
- ▶ followed by Kuala Lumpur with 1,273 sf;
- ▶ while the smallest average size was found to be in Perlis at 948 sf.

B) Population density (by dividing the population obtained from Department of Statistics against the area of the state)

- ▶ the highest population density was found in Kuala Lumpur with 7,354 people per km square;
- ▶ next is Putrajaya with 1,700;
- ▶ followed by Penang with 1,640;
- ▶ while the lowest population density was found in Sarawak with only 22 people per km sq.

DISCOVERY

It was not surprising to find, after considering the population density against terrace house prices, that the population density does affect terrace house prices - the more densely populated the area, the higher the price of property for terrace houses.

*** Observing monthly gross household income**

Taking into account the monthly gross household income (retrieved from the Malaysian Statistics Department), Khow found:

- ▶ residents in Kuala Lumpur recorded the highest median monthly gross household income earners receiving RM7,620 per month;
- ▶ not too far behind was inhabitants in Putrajaya taking home RM7,512 per month;
- ▶ followed by Selangor earning RM6,214 per month.

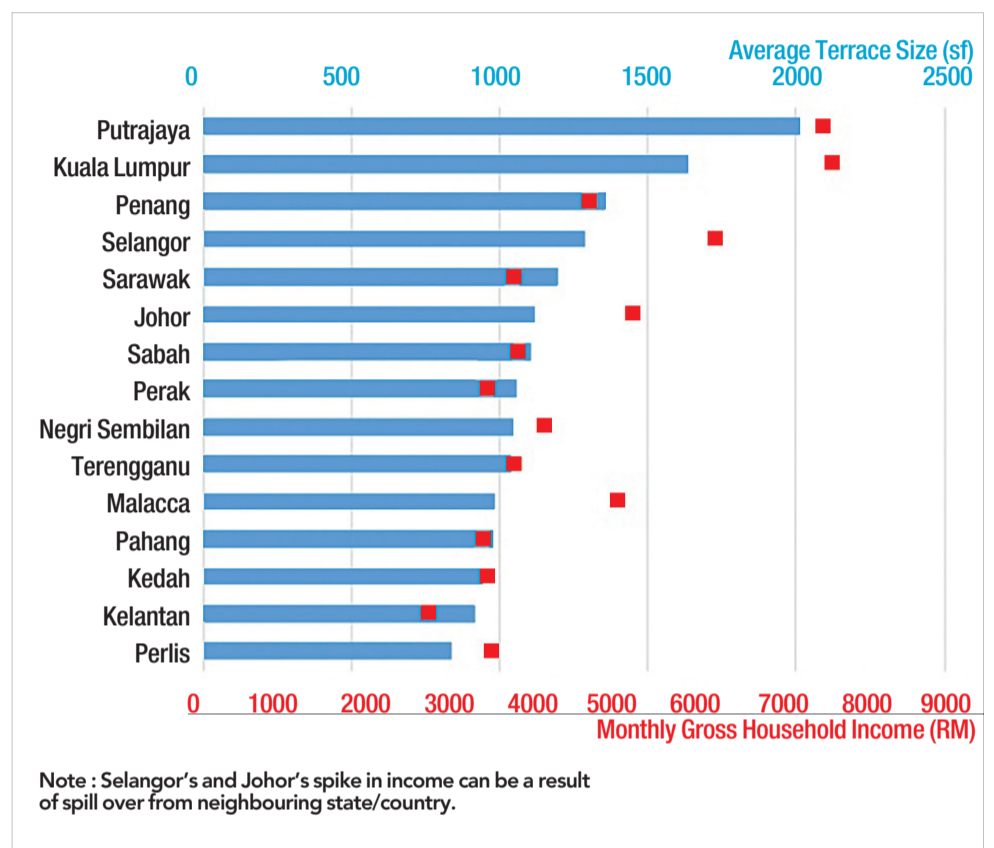
Khow felt that the spike in income for Selangor and Johor could be the result of "spillover" from the neighbouring state/country. Data also showed that there has been a dramatic increase in household income, for those residing in Malacca, especially in recent years. Khow expects a property boom in the state, with the High Speed Rail stopping in Ayer Keroh.

DISCOVERY

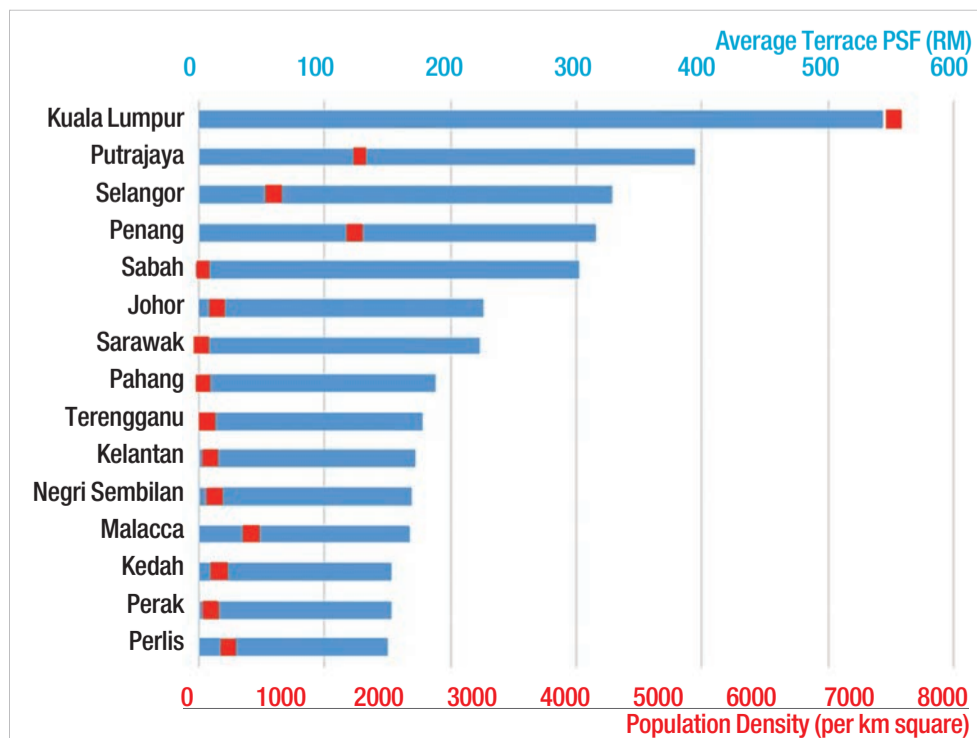
Having considered the average income and the size of terrace properties across the various states/cities, data revealed that owners of larger terrace houses were not found in places like Kelantan or Pahang where there is an abundance of land and prices are cheaper; instead it was in high income earning locations like Putrajaya and Kuala Lumpur.

The conclusion: "While property owners will be able to purchase larger properties at a bigger discount on moving out into the suburbs and rurals, this was only a part of the "big picture". Ultimately, people's income and earning power are still the bedrock and prime force to influence how big a property they can purchase, whether in the city, the suburbs or the rurals."

▶ Email your feedback and queries to: propertyqs@thesundaily.com



Note : Selangor's and Johor's spike in income can be a result of spill over from neighbouring state/country.



Huge on connectivity

APART from achieving equilibrium in providing just the right amount of nature and a pulsating lifestyle, Selangor Dredging Berhad (SDB) offers excellent connectivity in its SqWhere mixed development enclave. Comprising a small office, versatile office tower with retail offices and serviced apartments - SqWhere summons a challenge among other development projects, where connectivity is concerned.

Via an elevated forest deck, residents will be able to commute, interact and engage with ease, connecting to six Klang Valley highways and Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) networks.

The location of this property in Sungai Buloh is also provides easy access to the Kg Selamat MRT Station via a link bridge,

which easily connects one to Sunway Giza, 1 Utama, The Curve, etc. and directly takes one into the heart of the Golden Triangle in KL city centre. Moreover, with just two stops away to the Sg Buloh KTM station and the MRT2 Sungai Buloh-Serdang-Putrajaya Line - it's almost as though the sky's the limit where connectivity is concerned.

Sungai Buloh itself inter-links with six major highways, which include the PLUS, NKVE, LDP, MRR2, SPRINT and Guthrie Corridor Expressway. So, if excellent connectivity is top on your DNA list for properties to buy or invest in, there's really no need to rack one's brains at all. Just visit SqWhere's Show Gallery or its website at www.sdb.com.my