

Learning Unit 6:

Built Environment of Malaysia

Henry Ford, born in 1863, was an American visionary, founder of the Ford Motor Company, and chief developer of the assembly line mass production method. By creating the first automobile that middle-class Americans could afford, he transmuted the automobile from an expensive curiosity into an accessible conveyance that profoundly impacted the American economy in the 20th century. His introduction of the Ford Model T revolutionized automobile in the transportation industry. As the company owner, he became one of the richest and best-known people in the world.

Henry Ford famously professed “Coming together is the beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success”





The manifestation of Built Environment (BE) frequently showcases the collective magnum opus from a team of highly qualified professionals working tirelessly to ensure that each development project delivers its utmost objectives. One fine example is our own majestic Petronas Twin Towers. Fully completed in 1999, they remain the tallest twin-towers until this day.

Thanks to its geographical location, Malaysia, has been strategically exposed to international trades, immigrations, colonialism as well as an array of political struggles which have over the years, shaped Malaysia as what it is now.

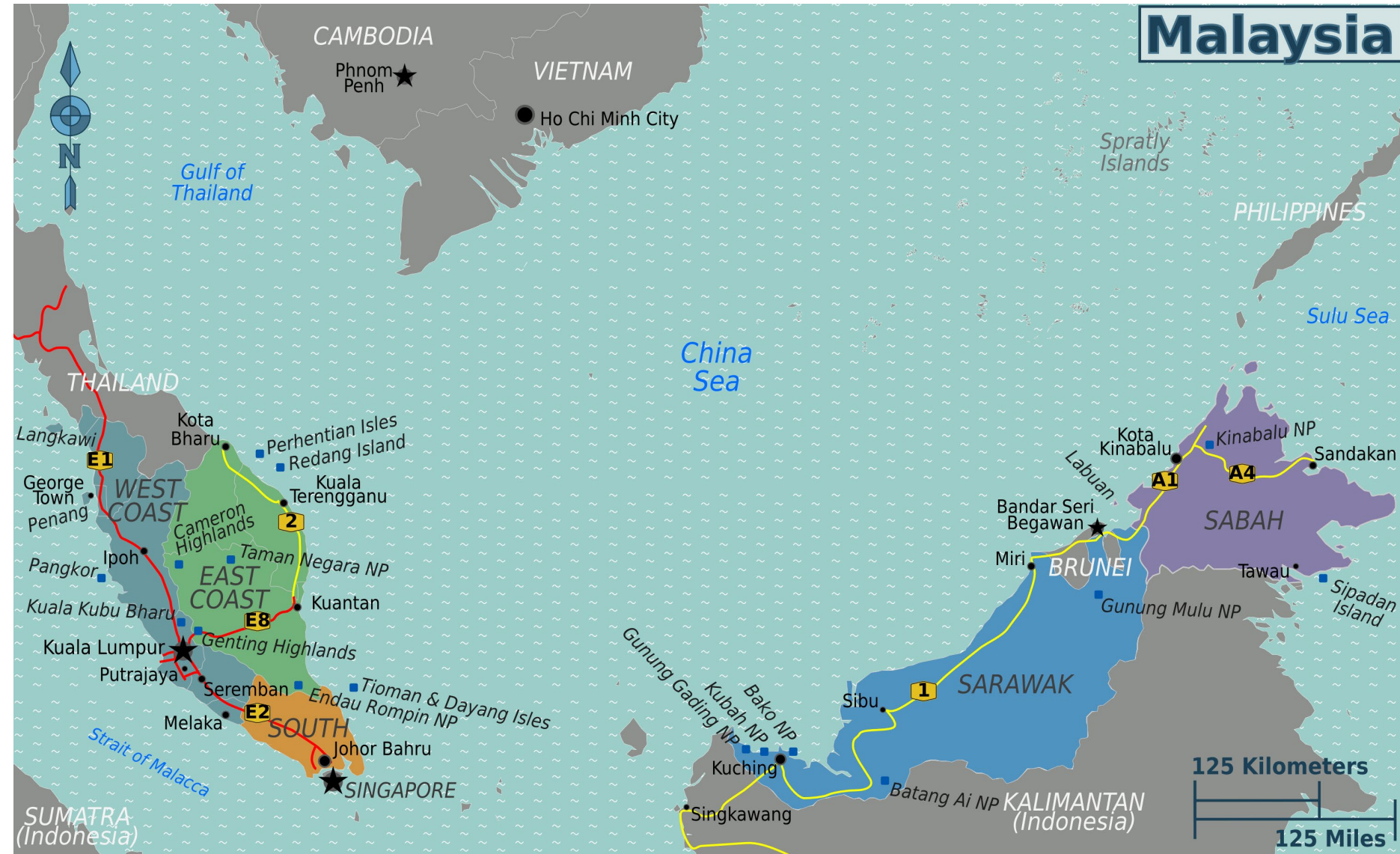
In other words, Malaysia, as a sovereign nation, has developed its own BE identity, as a result of cultural assimilations and residues from previous colonial experiences.



Malaysia is a country with 14 states, divided geographically into two major parts, the Peninsular Malaysia or West Malaysia, which is situated on the Asian mainland, and East Malaysia, which is situated on the island of Borneo.

This very fact is why the approaches to the BE of Malaysia may differ between these two major regions, partly because of the geographical conditions between the two, and also the very different historical and cultural experiences that have happened on both sides.

It is then boiled down to the different states and regions in which each has its own unique culture, dialects, traditions, ethnicities and of course, its distinctive BE.





In fact, there exists no specific way to define its identity, and from what it seems, the Malaysian identity is a reflection of various cultures combined together, thus resulting in what we call an eclectic identity.

The indigenous Malay and the Bumiputera of Sarawak and Sabah have developed its own traditional, vernacular style of shaping the BE.

The vernacular tradition is inherited from the Austronesian culture, which most scholars have suggested it to be the origin of the indigenous people in Malaysia, as apparent in the language of their BE.



Take the Iban longhouses, for example. The single, elongated house structure built on stilts are resembling the other traditional houses in Borneo including those in Indonesia and other Austronesian cultures such as in Taiwan and Australia. This is a strong reflection of an egalitarian culture practiced by the Bornean natives.





The language of traditional Malay houses is slightly different from that of the egalitarian Austronesian culture, with different variations on the space layout to reflect the Malay culture, which is shaped by the Islamic way of living.





Then came the Chinese who mostly settled in urban areas and subsequently created their own unique Chinese architectural styles which we can still see on many of the Chinese Shophouses to this day.

Undeniably, the colonial days from the Portuguese, Dutch, British and Japanese occupation in yesteryears significantly impacted the overall Built Environment in Malaysia.





Being a British colonial before gaining its own independence in 1957, it is perfectly normal that Malaysia's current administrative and legislative systems are heavily adapted from the British systems. This is evidenced in the professions of BE in Malaysia.

Here, we will briefly introduce to you the roles of five professions, namely the Architect, the Quantity Surveyor, the Landscape Architect, the Town Planner and lastly but certainly not the least, the Engineers.





Firstly for Architects, the Architects Act 1967 is an Act to provide for the registration of architects, sole proprietorships, partnerships and corporate bodies providing architectural consultancy services, interior designers and building draughtsmen in Malaysia.

The statutory authority responsible for the enforcement of the Architects Act is the Board of Architects Malaysia or locally known as Lembaga Arkitek Malaysia (LAM).

LAWS  
OF  
MALAYSIA

# ARCHITECTS ACT 1967 (ACT 117) & RULES

(AS AT 20<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2018)



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A Professional Architect in Malaysia carries the title 'Ar', which implies that this person has been subjected to rigorous evaluation before earning himself or herself the right to be called a Professional Architect. To be a Professional Architect in Malaysia, one has to go through 3 different stages of studying and evaluation process to qualify.

Coexist and playing an equally important role is the Malaysian Institute of Architects - the national professional institute representing architects in Malaysia. This institute is better known as Pertubuhan Arkitek Malaysia (PAM).





Secondly, for the Quantity Surveyors, the QS Act 1967 (Amendment 2015) provides for the registration of quantity surveyors, sole proprietorships, partnerships and corporate bodies providing quantity surveying consultancy services in Malaysia.

The professional body governing this profession is called the Board of Quantity Surveyors Malaysia or locally known as Lembaga Juruukur Bahan Malaysia (LJBM).

In addition, there's also an institution that represents and promotes the services and continuous development of the surveying profession and is this institution is known as the Royal Institution of Surveyors Malaysia (RISM).



## **LAWS OF MALAYSIA ACT 487**

**QUANTITY SURVEYORS  
ACT 1967**  
*(INCORPORATING AMENDMENTS  
UP TO 2015)*

**LEMBAGA JURUUKUR BAHAN MALAYSIA**  
(BOARD OF QUANTITY SURVEYORS MALAYSIA)  
<https://www.bqsm.gov.my>



Bear in mind that a Professional or Chartered Surveyor in Malaysia (who carries the title 'Sr') is not necessarily referring to QS alone. The title is granted by RISM, according to different divisions of Surveying, namely, Quantity Surveyors, Geomatics and Land Surveyors (GLS), Property Surveyors as well as Building Surveyors.

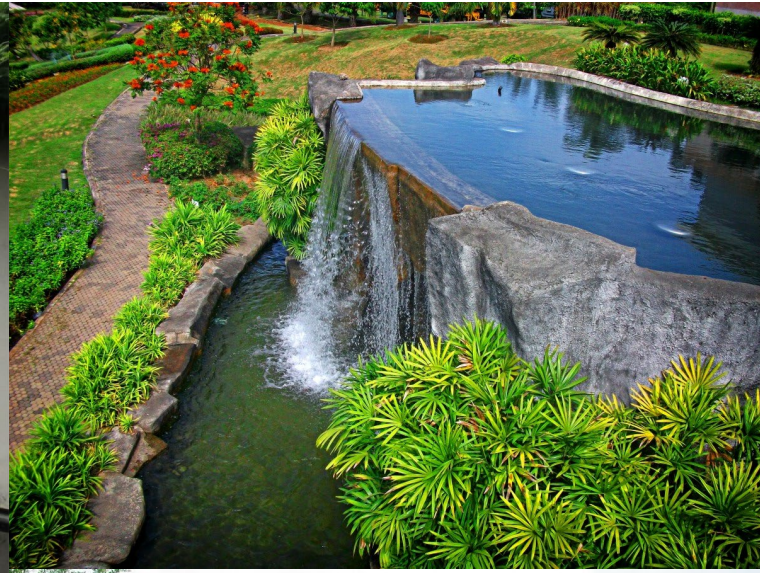
Back to the QS Act, the Amended 2015 QS Act will definitely open up the Malaysian QS industry globally with the abolishment of citizenship clause, and the introduction of experience route for members of allied organisation which was announced during the Pacific Association of QS (PAQS) Board Meeting held in Christchurch in May 2016.





Next, the Landscape Architects. Landscape architecture combines design with the environment, art with science. It is about everything outside the front door, both urban and rural, at the interface between people and natural systems.

For the past 30 years, landscape architects have often been the unsung heroes of Malaysia's development projects. These passionate individuals work tirelessly to balance the needs of the environment alongside the construction of physical features such as buildings and public spaces. Having said that, the industry has long recognised the highly valuable professional services rendered by the Landscape Architects.





In 1982, Angkatan Landskap Arkitek Malaysia (ALAM) was accepted as a member of the Malaysian Professional Centre or Balai Ikhtisas Malaysia (BIM). Subsequently, international recognition came by becoming a member of the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA) and the International Union of Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in 1984. With an increasing number of local graduates from Landscape Architecture courses, there was a need to move the association forward to represent all new and existing members.

As a result, on December 14, 1987, ALAM transformed itself into the Institute of Landscape Architects Malaysia (ILAM), which continues to be recognised with this acrostic until today. Professional Landscape Architects in Malaysia carries the title LAr.





We move on to Town Planners. The majority of town planners are employed by the government and local authorities, although opportunities for work in other areas are increasing. Some large firms such as house-builders, supermarkets and utility companies employ planners to deal with their planning work. In addition, Town Planners also work for environmental and conservation charities.

Locally, The Malaysian Institute of Planners, or in short MIP, set its primary objective to promote the science and art of Town Planning for the benefit of the public. It does this by ensuring the existence of a body of professional planners with the appropriate knowledge, training and skills to promote the advancement of town planning in Malaysia.



The MIP is a professional institute that is a membership-registered organization. Most of its members are fully qualified professional town planners, working as planning officers with various federal, state and local authorities, as town planning consultants, lecturers in universities or as planners for developers and various organisations with significant land banks.

MIP has since its inception champion and lead progress and change in planning practice, address issues of importance to the planning profession and the public interest and deliver relevant and contemporary benefits and services to its members.

Professional Town Planners in Malaysia carries the title TPr.





Lastly, we have the Engineers. For this group of professionals, you will be required to investigate their roles as well as their governing bodies as a learning activity.

To summarise what we have covered in this unit, first we look at the geographical history of Malaysia. We discussed how the diverse culture of its populace has had an enormous influence on the development of its unique identity, especially towards the BE. Then, we briefly ventured into the historical influence of the British systems since the colonial days. Finally, we introduced the five important professions pertinent to the functioning of BE, namely the Architects, the Quantity Surveyors, the Landscape Architects, the Town Planners and the Engineers.



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# IEM

**The Institution of Engineers, Malaysia**

## Resources:

- i. Board of Architects Malaysia. <https://lam.gov.my/>
- ii. Board of Engineers Malaysia. <http://bem.org.my/>
- iii. Board of Quantity Surveyors Malaysia. <https://www.bqsm.gov.my/>
- iv. Institute of Landscape Architects Malaysia. <https://www.ilamalaysia.org/>
- v. Malaysian Institute of Planners. <https://mip.org.my/>
- vi. Pertubuhan Arkitek Malaysia. <http://www.pam.org.my/>
- vii. Royal Institution of Surveyors Malaysia. <https://rism.org.my/>
- viii. The Institution of Engineers Malaysia. <https://www.myiem.org.my/>
- ix. The Pacific Association of Quantity Surveyors. <https://www.paqs.net/>