



News Release
For Immediate Publication

MALAYSIA TRIUMPHED OVER 11 COUNTRIES IN ASIA-WIDE DESIGN COMPETITION

*ASIA'S RENOWNED DESIGNERS IMPART KNOW-HOW IN 8TH NIPPON PAINT
YOUNG DESIGNER AWARD (NPYDA) REGIONAL LEARNING PROGRAMME IN
BANGKOK*

Kuala Lumpur, 18 March 2016 – Tan Kwon Chong from Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) emerged as the overall regional winner for the Architectural Category in the Nippon Paint Young Designer Award (NPYDA) 2015, after an intense round of grand finale in Bangkok, beating 11 other young designers who won in their respective home countries in Asia.

Tan, with his winning concept entitled *“Evolving Nature: Eco-learning Market Centre”* said, ***“I’m truly honoured with this win. The theme “Design with Heart: For a Sustainable Future: With People in Mind” had indeed prompted me to think about how I can contribute back to society through my design concepts – one that will benefit people from all walks of life. I would like to encourage all the young designers out there to be passionate and embrace the essence of ‘having people and environment in mind’ in their architectural ideations.”***

Tan’s architectural design is based on his vision to give back to the people and the natural environment at Pontian Kechil, a fishing village in Johor, where he grew up in. Infusing elements of human and ecology interactions, reflecting the site’s history and purpose and blending architectural concepts with its natural surroundings, his Eco-learning Market Centre aims to be a sustainable recreational park that has the ability to maintain the natural beauty of its surrounding, promotes community engagement as well as educate the public on the traditional living culture of the fishing village.

As for the Interior Design Category, Singaporean Soo Chunn Herr took home the regional award with his *“Equine: Engage, Experience & Evolve”* design that focuses on a lifestyle destination in Bukit Timah (Singapore) – for families to reconnect through various interactions; one that provides therapy for the disabled and the elderly as well as one that facilitates the rehabilitation or recovery of retired horses and pony.

Commenting on the wins, Wee Siew Kim, Group Chief Executive Officer of NIPSEA Group said, ***“Congratulations to the two regional level winners of NPYDA 2015. Indeed, it is not a walk in a park to emerge as champions on an Asian level. It takes a form of symbiosis for the artist and his art to speak the same tune, for the artist to present his art like an extension of himself. NPYDA’s success also lies in the network of industry veterans who share the same passion as Nippon Paint – in nurturing the talents of tomorrow. The real-work exposure and mentorship that complements their academic pursuit, will truly open greater doors for their future career, and that would be the vision of this award platform.”***

One of Asia’s premier design competitions, NPYDA, saw three renowned captains in the architectural and interior design industry - Ar. Paul Noritaka Tange (Japan), Ar. Serina Hijjas (Malaysia) and Ar. Amata Luphaiboon (Thailand) share their insights with young designers from 12 countries during its recently-concluded Regional Learning Programme held in Bangkok, Thailand.

The NPYDA Bangkok Learning Programme, which was held at the prestigious Chulalongkorn University, kicked off with the keynote speaker Ar. Paul Tange, President of Tange Associates and son of renowned architect Kenzo Tange, who shared his insights on various projects around the world and their unique characteristics. He also shared on his design concept and rationale for one of his latest project, the Aquatics Centre for the Tokyo Olympics 2020 – reliving the same passion of his dad when the late Kenzo Tange designed the National Gymnasium for the Tokyo Olympics 1964, more than 50 years ago.

Commenting on NPYDA 2015 as a learning platform for budding designers, Tange said, ***“It is indeed commendable to have this platform which competes at a regional level, encouraging transborder exchange of ideas and sharing of knowledge amongst students and practitioners. It is important for the industry to recognise the potentials in these young designers, while at the same time allowing them to learn new skills and adapt their design approaches. I am happy to be part of this effort in contributing towards the nurturing of young talents. My advice to them is to be out there in the field, to feel the relationship between you and the space, consider the urban and human fundamentals and have a deep understanding of the culture and traditions. We should all strive for architecture designs that can make a strong, bold statement.”***

Ar. Serina Hijjas, a key figure in the area of green architecture and sustainable development, was the second speaker who delivered her thoughts on ensuring designs finding an equilibrium between the built environments with its surrounding finite resources. Serina emphasised that a key driver for the future of sustainability is the convergence of nature and technology, and drawing a fine balance between both. Ar. Amata Luphaiboon, Principal of Department of Architecture Co., Bangkok delivered his sharing session on achieving the desired core design intent through research and inter-relationships amongst various architectural and nature-based elements, to an audience of over 200 students and industry professionals from across Asia.

On top of the sharing by the three guest speakers, the students were treated to a coaching session by the Deputy Dean and Associate Professor of Chulalongkorn University's Department of Architecture. The duo coached students on effectively presenting their works for the grand finale while pinpointing areas of improvement in terms of their design concepts.

A study tour was also organised as the final part of the Bangkok Learning Programme. The participants had the opportunity to experience a guided tour around Bangkok to visit some of the capital's iconic buildings, one of which was The Grand Palace of Bangkok that boasts a palace complex size of more than 2.3 million square feet, as well as the Vimanmek Mansion, which is decorated in a combination of European neo-classic style with traditional Thai motifs. The students also had the opportunity to view Wat Ratchanatdaram Temple, best known for Loha Prasat, a multi-tiered structure with 37 metal spires signifying the 37 virtues towards enlightenment, of which the gold-coloured spires were coated with Nippon Paint.

NPYDA was first introduced in Malaysia in 2008 and has witnessed increased popularity year after year, growing from just 87 entries in its first year to more than 3,000 entries in 2015. This premier design competition for interior design and architecture students is currently present across 12 countries in Asia namely Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam, Hong Kong, China, Japan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Papua New Guinea.

"I trust that the experience gained from the NPYDA's Learning Programme has positively impacted all the young designers from Asia, as it entails a thoughtfully-crafted platform that integrates the experience of industry veterans with the young creative optimism of its participants to provide a platform for real-world learnings and multi-country networking. Ultimately, Nippon Paint's interest is in nurturing Asia's next generation of designers whom will further elevate the industry's standards and capabilities."

"For the 2016 instalment, NPYDA will be extended to 3 additional countries, namely Sri Lanka, India and Taiwan, further firming its foothold as one of Asia's most established design competition. To reflect the scale in terms of its reach and stature, Nippon Paint has made a strategic decision to rename the competition as Asia Young Designer Award (AYDA) for its 9th year instalment. Leveraging on our leadership as a total coating solutions provider in Asia, we will continue to push the boundaries in terms of design and colour innovations as well as talent creation," concluded Wee.

About Nippon Paint Malaysia Group

The Nippon Paint Malaysia Group (“NPM Group”) is currently Malaysia’s No. 1 Total Coating Solutions provider, enjoying its market leadership position since 2008. The NPM Group is part of the Nippon Paint Group, which is currently Asia’s No. 1 coating manufacturer spanning 15 countries, built on a heritage of over 130 years dating back to 1881 in Japan.

Established in 1967 as Nippon Paint (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd., the company has since grown in leaps and bounds, and today, has emerged as a significant regional player within the coatings industry with presence in countries such as Pakistan, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Thailand and Indonesia.

The NPM Group places strong emphasis in Research and Development (R&D) activities, which remains a core priority to its success in product innovation. As a global leader in coating technologies with a database of more than 10,000 paint formulations, the NPM Group prides itself in being a Total Coating Solutions provider with a multi-segment portfolio of offerings ranging from Architectural, Automotive, Industrial, Protective to Marine coatings.

The Group has won consumer choice awards such as the Reader’s Digest Trusted Brand Awards (2006-2015) and Putra Brand Awards (2010-2015), as well as received industry accolades such as the Best Company for Leadership in Paint Technology Asia by IAIR in 2014 and Frost & Sullivan’s Paint & Coatings Company of The Year in 2011. In its concerted effort to champion sustainability towards a greener footprint, the Group has received the Green Label Certification (by the Singapore Environment Council), EcoLabelling Certification Licence (by SIRIM QAS International) and several Green Excellence Awards by Frost & Sullivan.

For more information on Nippon Paint Malaysia:

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