

PAM nurtures local talent

by **VIKNESH ASHLEY CLARENCE**

RISING home prices in the Klang Valley is becoming an urgent issue these days, as more and more medium-income earners are being priced out of the market.

While some argue that cheaper options, such as flats and walk-up apartments are readily available, they lack aspects of innovation, sustainability and sometimes even durability – all important elements to the modern day homeseeker.

With this in mind, Pertubuhan Arkitek Malaysia (PAM) and Lafarge Malaysia Bhd have teamed up to create an innovative competition that addresses these issues as well as showcases the future of local architectural talent. What better way to seek for fresh solutions than by tapping into fresh minds?

The PAM-Lafarge Architecture Student Competition 2013, which began in September last year, invited PAM student members to submit designs on sustainable and viable affordable housing, and last weekend saw the final round of judging held at the PAM headquarters at

Wisma Bandar in Kuala Lumpur.

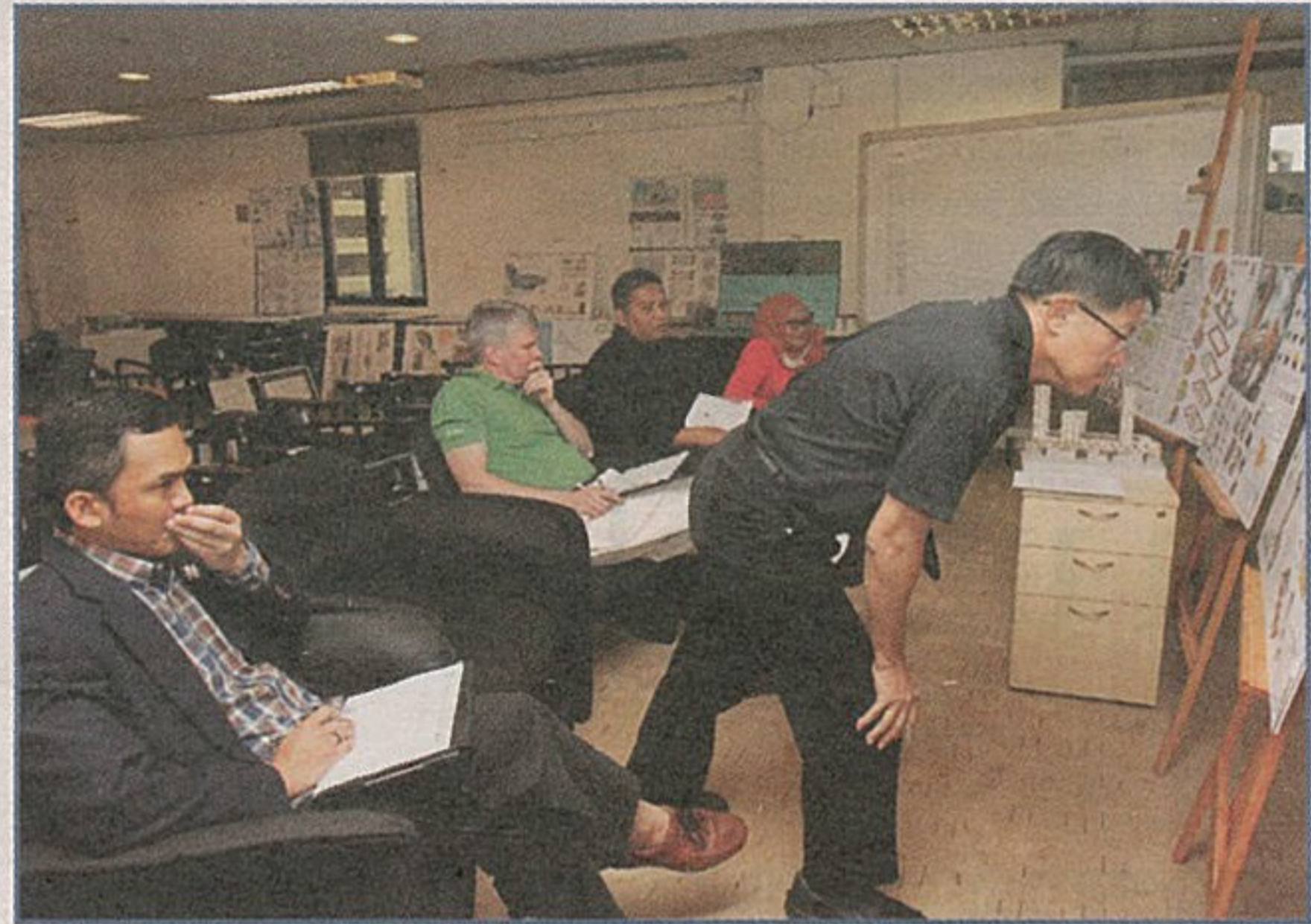
All participants were required to design landed or strata property, 50% cement based, in line with the minimum housing standards.

The students had to submit two design layouts for a Type A three bedroom and two bathroom unit with a built-up of 850sq ft and a Type B three-plus-one bedroom and two bathroom unit with 1,100sq ft of space. This had to be achieved at a construction cost that does not exceed RM100psf.

Each submission had to comply with designing affordable home concepts, suitable for a family of six and possessing the outstanding universal values of communal living qualities, incorporating passive design strategies, using green technologies and infused with landscape elements as well as complimentary facilities.

The competition saw a total of 69 submissions, and these were pared down to just 13 finalists for the final judging last Saturday to decide on the top three contenders. The results will be revealed on the 20th of February during the PAM-Lafarge Architecture Student Competition Awards Ceremony.

Lafarge, a global cement



Judges busy scrutinising the entries by PAM student members

manufacturing giant, said the main goal of its involvement in the competition is to face off issues in affordable housing in the country, and helping to meet this target by identifying affordable housing solutions.

The company also wants to change the mindsets of the future generation architects, by encouraging them to look at producing affordable housing with reduced cost, via promoting construction efficiency with the use of the right construction methods, materials and solutions.

“Affordable housing should not just mean cheaper homes, in fact it must also mean these homes are sustainable in nature. These houses should be environmentally friendly, energy efficient,

durable and capable of lasting for many generations to come,” said Lafarge Malaysia’s president and chief executive officer Bradley Mulrone.

Winning individuals, teams and the university or college or institution represented will take home a first prize sum of RM10,000, second prize of RM5,000 or third prize of RM3,000.

The other finalists will not go home empty handed either, as they will be given an honorary mention as well as RM500. All entries into the competition will receive certificates of participation.

According to the organisers, the winning designs derived from this competition might even be considered to be part of an actual project in the near future.