

TA Enterprise to enter new business

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FINANCIAL services and property development group TA Enterprise Bhd (4898) will make its maiden foray into the venture capital business, focusing on the financial sector.

Its managing director and chief executive officer Alicia Tiah said the venture was still in the infancy stage, adding that further details such as investment allocation would be announced later.

"Part of the financing may come from the listing of our property arm TA Global Bhd. At the same time, we will beef up our corporate finance business," she told reporters after the group's extraordinary general meeting in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

On the long-awaited listing of TA Global, which has been deferred more than three times since last year, Alicia said the Securities Commission had approved all of its proposals.

The listing plan was earlier postponed due to unfavourable market conditions.

TA Global's listing is tentatively on November 30, which will also see its cash position reach RM135 million.

"TA Enterprise's cash position after the listing of TA Global will total RM230 million provided all of its public and Bumiputera share portions are fully subscribed," said Alicia.

After the listing, TA Enterprise will own 57.3 per cent of TA Global.

On the group's outlook, Alicia said that much will depend on the stock market's performance as among its income sources is brokerage retail income.

"When the market is rosy, so will our profits. Our brokerage business in Hong Kong is also giving us a good return due to its proximity to China," she said.

On its hotel business, TA Enterprise executive chairman Datuk Tiah Thee Kian said the group is always on the lookout for good opportunities.

"We are looking for opportunities all the time, especially for hotels in London and Vancouver, by either building one ourselves or through a joint venture.

"It should be cheap and give us a stable income inflow. Those with a RM600 million price range are good for the company, and we will only buy during recession time and not during boom time," Thee Kian said.

TA Enterprise owns the Coast Whistler Hotel in Vancouver, Canada, worth RM191 million, as well as The Westin Melbourne (RM390 million) and the Radisson Plaza Hotel (RM286 million) in Sydney, Australia.

